



# ***Daily Report***

## **Latin America**

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FBIS-LAT-96-024

Monday

February 1996

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January 1996

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# Daily Report

## Latin America

FBIS-LAT-96-024

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## Cuba

### Cuban Newspaper on U.S. Order To Stop Computer Donation

PA0202184196 Havana PRENSA LATINA in Spanish  
1628 GMT 2 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Havana, 2 Feb (PL) — A sensitive U.S. Government document on the creation of a multiagency task force to keep the Pastors for Peace from crossing into Mexico with a load of 300 second-hand computers was published today in Havana.

According to GRANMA newspaper, the Commerce Department notice informs the border post between San Diego border (United States) and Tijuana (Mexico) that the "task force" has been working for some weeks on a plan to close all the points that activists could possibly use to bring the computers to Cuba. In a copy of the document, carried on the newspaper's front page, this U.S. entity stated that the task force comprises officials of the IRS, Highway Police, FBI, and the Department of Immigration and Naturalization. In addition, Dr. Jeremias Hernandez, director of the National Medical Sciences Information Center, explained that with these 300 computers — not very advanced and second-hand models — the goal was to connect the nation's hospitals and clinics to networks of services in this field.

"Most of the machines were meant to allow doctors providing primary care in the island's most remote places to have access to information," Hernandez stressed.

It was reported that a group of U.S. activists that had planned to donate this shipment to the island was arrested by customs officials of that country while trying to cross the border with Mexico with the computers.

### Cuban Radio: U.S. Customs Officials Seize Computers

PA0202163196 Havana Radio Havana Cuba  
in Spanish 1300 GMT 1 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] San Diego riot police attacked and arrested approximately a dozen members of the 6th U.S.-Cuba Friendship Caravan which planned to bring 300 computers to Cuba to contribute to the electronic linking of Cuban health centers.

In a telephone conversation with Radio Havana Cuba, Blade Dunlop, the national coordinator of the Pastors for Peace, said the convoy of 30 vehicles is surrounded by policemen less than 100 meters from the Mexican border and that they are arresting anyone who resists turning over the cargo which they intend to confiscate.

The Pastors for Peace project, organizer of the caravan, is activating its emergency network in Congress to

denounce police repression to prevent the medical aid from arriving in Cuba.

U.S. customs agents seized 60 computers from the activists arguing that they would serve to create an information network between Washington medical centers and Havana.

### Cuban TV: U.S. Customs Blocks Shipment Via Mexico

PA0302192396 Havana Tele Rebelde and Cubavision  
Networks in Spanish 0100 GMT 1 Feb 96

[From the "NTV" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] News agencies reported shortly before 1930 [0030 GMT 1 February] that U.S. customs officials had stopped a Pastors for Peace motorcade heading for the Mexican border. The pastors were trying to bring 360 computers to Cuba via Mexico. U.S. Customs officials said that the computers would be confiscated. Pastors for Peace representative and the Clinton administration reportedly have opened talks on the issue. More than 100 agents took part in the operation to prevent the computers from being shipped. No arrests have been reported as of this moment.

### Cuban TV: U.S. Groups Condemn 'Brutality' of Authorities

PA0302194596 Havana Tele Rebelde and Cubavision  
Networks in Spanish 0100 GMT 2 Feb 96

[From the "NTV" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] Various religious and social organizations in the United States have condemned the brutality of U.S. authorities in efforts to prevent them from sending humanitarian aid to Cuba. Andrea Saez, a Pastors for Peace activist, told the media in San Diego, California, today that the police's brutality against these peaceful people is a disgrace, especially since many of them were over 60 years old, women, and children. A total of 11 people were arrested and one person was sent to the hospital following the incident. Approximately 100 volunteers yesterday tried to cross the Mexican border with a cargo of computers and other products, which U.S. authorities seized violently. The over 300 computers that were withheld from the members of the Cuba-U.S. Friendship Caravan are to be given to the National Medical Sciences Information Center of the Public Health Ministry:

[Begin recording] [Dr. Jeremias Hernandez Ojito, director of the Medical Sciences Information Center] Maribel These computers were basically going to expand the scientific and technical information of our country's health

A bulletin sent out last year by the National Institute of Housing to diplomatic representations in Havana pointed out that apartments can be purchased "in freely convertible currency, with full ownership by foreign residents or individuals seeking temporary or permanent residence in the country."

According to Sociudades Inmobiliarias Manager Jean-Pierre Pastor, the fact that this step has been taken in such an important sector "is proof of the existing determination at the highest level to be consistent with the economic opening. It also reflects the willingness and capacity to adapt national laws and statutes to potential foreign investors."

The real estate, which will include 600 luxury apartments, will be built in an area of 30,000 square meters in three residential neighborhoods located in western Havana: Miramar, the site of numerous embassies, companies, and commercial firms, and neighboring Nautico and Hemingway Marina.

According to Pastor, the construction should begin in mid-1996, when a temporary construction company — a joint foreign and Cuban company — is established.

Pastor said that the buildings' structure "will display features of Cuban architecture and culture; we are not planning to construct concrete boxes, as is done in European countries."

Pastor stressed that, even before beginning this project, he received many offers to buy or lease the apartments, which will be located in buildings of four or five stories. These apartments will have two to five bedrooms, with service facilities on the ground floor.

#### **Mexican Party Head: Cuban Visit Reaffirms Common Ideals**

PA0302012896 Havana PRENSA LATINA in Spanish  
1929 GMT 28 Jan 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Havana, 28 Jan (PL) — Santiago Onate, president of the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), said here today the visit to the island by a PRI delegation has reaffirmed the traditional friendship and common ideals between Cuba and Mexico.

In a statement to PRENSA LATINA, Onate said one major moment of his stay in this country was the meeting he held early this morning with Cuban President Fidel Castro. He described the meeting as "intense, a moment during which opinions and ideas were exchanged."

The Mexican leader arrived in Havana on 26 January heading a delegation of the PRI's National Executive Committee and held talks with other Cuban party and government officials.

Referring to his two and a half hours meeting with Fidel Castro, Onate said they discussed relations between the PRI and the Communist Party of Cuba (PCC) and examined events taking place in Latin America.

Onate added: We also discussed the evolution of the party in Mexico, how democratic processes are progressing, and the tasks the PRI is carrying out to resolve the economic and social problems the majority of the Mexican people are enduring.

He said: The commander explained how Cuba was able to overcome adversities that began in 1989 when the collapse of socialism began in several European countries and how Cuba, having a true and real revolution, was able to continue its own road to social justice.

Onate said they also discussed how the Cubans have been able to pave their own road despite the economic and commercial blockade imposed by the United States more than three decades ago, which he described as inhuman and inefficient.

Regarding Mexican issues discussed with his interlocutor, Onate mentioned the Alliance for Economic Recovery the government of President Ernesto Zedillo has been promoting and the large macroeconomic variables in 1995. He also commented on the means that will be used in 1996 to try to have socially productive investments capable of creating jobs and producing a gradual recovery of workers' salaries.

He said he and Fidel Castro talked at length about the way in which Mexican society and the political parties have evolved, as well as the manner in which the PRI has confronted certain effects of the economic crisis through elections while at the same time remaining true to the principle of democracy and social justice.

According to Onate, the successive and recent visits to Cuba by leaders of Mexico's main political parties have been "a sign of much encouragement" for the Cuban chief of state who, he said, noted that the Mexicans have always been consistent. He said these meetings are important today more than ever.

Asked whether President Zedillo's invitation to President Fidel Castro to visit Mexico was discussed, Onate said that the Cuban chief of state "wants to respond" to the invitation and that the respective Foreign Ministries are already discussing the agenda of the trip as well as the most suitable date.

The official activities of the PRI mission will conclude this evening with the participation of its members in the March of Torches, along with hundreds of thousands of Havana residents, in celebration of the 143d anniversary of the birth of national hero Jose

Marti. In this regard, Onate said he will participate in the march "upon an invitation from the Communist Party of Cuba and because of the shining example that Marti, with his struggle for a dignified, sovereign, and just Latin America, represents."

In his opinion, his three-day visit to the largest of the Antillean islands allowed him to participate in an intense dialogue with PCC members, to become aware of the government's vigor in conducting social policies, of the progress being made by new areas of the economy, such as tourism, and of the progress self-employed workers are making.

This visit has been a positive one that reaffirms friendship and common ideals and permits guidelines to continue with these actions in the future, be it through direct contacts between the PRI and the PCC or through the Permanent Conference of Latin American Political Parties, over which Onate presides.

The PRI delegation was comprised by Laura Madrazo de Onate, secretary of community development; Alejandro Sobarzo, secretary of international relations; Enrique Jackson, president of electoral actions; Miguel Orozco, Onate's personal secretary; and Hector Gonzalez, press secretary, among others.

In addition to visiting sites of historic, scientific, and social interest, the visitors met with Vice President Carlos Lage, Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina, parliament President Ricardo Alarcon, Abel Prieto, president of the Union of Writers and Artists; and Jose Ramon Balaguer, chief of international relations of the PCC and the visitors' host.

#### **Cuban Foreign Minister Greeted Guatemalan Business Group**

PA0302013896 Havana Cubavision Network  
in Spanish 0100 GMT 27 Jan 96

[From the "NTV" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] At the Foreign Ministry today, Cuban Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina officially welcomed the first Guatemalan business delegation to visit Cuba in the past 30 years.

Executives of 16 enterprises of the union of exporters of Guatemalan nontraditional products are part of this delegation, which has been in Cuba since 22 January discussing investment and trade prospects. This visit comes after Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina's trip to Guatemala two weeks ago to attend President Alvaro Arzu's swearing-in ceremony:

[Begin Robaina recording] The people of Guatemala can offer us many things, and Cuba is also a country with

much to offer despite our needs. They will find out what we have to offer. I hope other nations with which we have begun talks will demonstrate the same successful, quick response the Guatemalan businessmen have given on this occasion. [end recording]

The Guatemalan business delegation has met with high-ranking officials of the Chamber of Commerce, the Ministries of Foreign Trade and Tourism, and local businessmen;

[Begin unidentified speaker recording] The delegation will be involved in a Guatemalan-Cuban chamber of commerce upon return to Guatemala; this measure is somewhat a courageous one, because there are no diplomatic relations between our nations yet, but I believe—and this point is also the hope of our mission—we can reestablish diplomatic relations in 1996. [end recording]

#### **Cuba, Brazil Sign Complementary Modification of Protocol**

PA0402011596 Havana PRENSA LATINA in Spanish  
2346 GMT 30 Jan 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Havana, 30 Jan (PL) — Cuba and Brazil signed in this capital today a complementary modification of the Scientific-Technical Cooperation Protocol the two countries reached in 1987 with a view to encouraging exchange in the field of maritime-port topics.

Cuban Transportation Minister Senen Casas Regueiro and Brazilian Transport Minister Odacir Klein signed the document, which is intended to establish the general basis for bilateral assistance to develop the port sectors and maritime and various modes of transport between the two countries.

According to the pact, contracting parties pledge to activate, in line with their capabilities, the necessary human resources, materials, and logistics to execute the work program.

The complementary modification, which has no date of expiration, is canceled only after one of the signatories lodges a complaint and also requires that the corresponding organizations promote its development and execution for the common good.

Odacir Klein said the goal of his mission in Cuba is to search for greater exchange of knowledge and experiences, as well as to offer greater attention to specific economic problems of the two countries, whose governments, he said, are concerned about the well-being of the inhabitants. In this regard, he stressed the interest in Cuba's maritime-port development and

reiterated that one of the goals is a joint operation, anywhere on the island, for loading and unloading, which will be useful for Brazilian, Central American, and Caribbean ships.

Senen Casas Regueiro expressed the Cuban Government's willingness to fully comply with the recently signed protocol and stressed the significant help for this sector in Cuba.

The Brazilian minister and his retinue, comprised by four entrepreneurs, were also received by Vice President Carlos Lage, who spoke about local economic subjects and other topics of bilateral interest, according to what PRENSA LATINA has learned.

A delegation that arrived on 28 January also met with Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina, First Foreign Trade Minister German Amado Blanco, and various Transportation Ministry directors.

The delegation also toured the Casablanca shipyard, in the Bay of Havana, and Transportation Investigation Institute facilities.

#### **Cuban Doctors Recruited to Republic of South Africa**

*MB0402155196 Johannesburg SABC TV 1 Network in English 1800 GMT 3 Feb 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The first of up to 600 Cuban doctors will be arriving in the country soon. They have been given three-year contracts and will practice mainly in rural areas.

[Begin recording] [Reporter Snuki Zikalala] The South African delegation, led by the minister of health, Dr. Nkosazana Zuma, which arrived on Monday [29 January] in Cuba, has started its interviews with Cuban doctors who have applied to work in South Africa. Cuba, which has 57,000 doctors for a population of 11 million, has offered to help South Africa in filling up the vacant posts.

[Dr. Nkosazana Zuma] At the moment we have about 2,000 vacancies, 600 urgent, they need to be filled urgently, so I hope in phases we will probably be able to recruit up to 600 or so.

[Unidentified Cuban spokesman, in Spanish with superimposed translation into English] An agreement has been signed for an initial group of around 100 Cuban doctors. This number could increase according to the needs of South Africa.

[Zikalala] The Cuban doctors are being interviewed by Medical and Dental Council officials. Dr. Mario Capote, who is a professor at the state hospital, earns 400 pesos per month which is equivalent to 100 rands. Because

of the American economic blockade, Cubans have to live on ration cards. Per month they are allowed half a kilogram of beans, three kilograms of rice, three kilograms of sugar, and a kilogram of meat every two months.

[Dr. Mario Capote] And if we invite someone to eat it don't [as heard] last you.

[Zikalala] Due to the above-said conditions, Cuban doctors are prepared to work anywhere in the country. The Cuban doctors who are desperate to come to South Africa have got two aims in life: To improve their own economic conditions which are very poor, and to help South Africa in improving its health system. This is Snuki Zikalala and Stan Sekekane in Havana. [end recording]

#### **Cuba's General Customs Office To Continue Consolidation**

*PA0302013096 Havana PRENSA LATINA in Spanish 1304 GMT 29 Jan 96*

[By Antonio Ruiz Portal]

[FBIS Translated Text] The General Customs Office of Cuba this year will continue to perfect and consolidate its activities, as part of the economic changes in the country and the ties with foreign nations, Customs Director Brigadier General Pedro Pupo Perez said today.

The Customs Office Director told PRENSA LATINA the new realities of foreign trade of the Caribbean nation are characterized by a greater participation of local importing and exporting firms, commercial relations with more countries, and a noticeable increase in tourism.

In light of this situation, Pupo Perez said the degree of specialization of customs officials is being improved, while higher instruction programs have been planned. To this end, study programs have been devised, and the arrival of foreign experts from the World Customs Organization and other international customs organizations has been planned.

The Customs Office achieved positive results in 1995 thanks to the application of provisions issued mostly that year and in 1994 as well as the training of qualified personnel and the purchase of appropriate equipment, he added.

He said these measures contributed to a greater effectiveness in coping with customs offenses, including drug trafficking activities and the smuggling of cultural goods, phenomena which are taking place around the world.

In this regard, he said authorities seized 20 kg of cocaine last year from several people who take advantage of the large number of trips between Latin American countries and Cuba. From here, they travel to Europe to transport the drug to that region.

The official said Cuba does not have social problems derived from drug trafficking, but it does not allow the use of its territory for the illegal shipment of drugs.

Regarding the contraband of cultural goods, Pupo Perez spotlighted 1995's reduction in the looting of museum, artistic, or heritage pieces, adding that the Interior and Culture Ministries have contributed in this task.

The head of the Customs Office of the Republic of Cuba also emphasized the successful holding in this capital of the XVI Meeting of Latin America, Spain, and Portugal Customs Directors, which James Shaver, secretary general of that organization, attended. On that occasion, Pupo Perez said, Cuba joined three international agreements: The Kyoto Agreement on international trade regulations and facilities; the Nairobi Agreement on cooperation and repression of illicit activities, in the smuggling of merchandise among countries; and the agreement establishing the standardized system for names and classification.

The Cuban Customs Office is also a member of the World Customs Organization, the Cooperation Council for the Application of the Caribbean Customs Law, the Ibero-American Accord Organization—Latin America, Spain, and Portugal—and other international [words indistinct] and experiences.

In addition, Brigadier General Pupo Perez highlighted the existence of UN programs for the detection and classification of drugs and cooperation to equip the national agency.

One of the most important tasks on the agenda of the Customs Office pertains to tourism, an area of high growth in the country in recent years and which requires special attention, the Customs Office director said. In this regard, he mentioned among the adopted measures the application of two custom treatments for travelers in general: One for those arriving or leaving the country only with their personal belongings and for whom minimum controls are applied and another for those bringing presents. Those individuals carrying presents and articles with a value of up to \$1,000 must file them and pay taxes starting from the first \$100.

#### **Report on Cuba's International Tourism Group Havanatur**

PA0302020196 Havana Radio Havana Cuba  
in Spanish 0000 GMT 31 Jan 96

[Report by Isis Maria Allen from the "Evening Information Review" newscast — passages within quotation marks are recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] Out of the no less than 900,000 tourists Cuba expects to receive this year, 200,000 will go through Havanatur, the international tourism operators and travel agencies group that has Augusto Hernandez as its general manager:

[Hernandez] "The feature of our enterprise is that our companies will always promote, perhaps even more actively, Cuba as a tourist destination even during the most difficult times in the country or if those should arise due to any economic or political situation. When other tour operators notice unfavorable political situations, they reduce their efforts to promote tourism to the island, but such times are when Havanatur intensifies its efforts to promote Cuba as a tourist destination."

Havanatur has a network of 91 travel agencies, including those owned by the group, associates, and representatives covering 35 countries, mainly in America and Europe:

[Hernandez] "The agencies we have in various countries have managed to bring to Cuba an important amount of tourists compared to the total amount of tourists received in the country. The country received approximately 340,000 tourists last year, and 150,000 out of this total came through the Havanatur travel agencies; that is, approximately 21 percent [words indistinct]. Havanatur's strategic importance in the country can be surmised from the volume of tourists our group of agencies is able to move."

In statements to this radio station, the Havanatur general manager has said the group's main markets include Spain, France, Mexico, Canada, Belgium, Holland, Nassau, Venezuela, Chile, and Colombia, adding that there are other important markets, which he has called future markets, that have to be explored to assess their tourism potential and start, if convenient, promoting visits to Cuba:

[Hernandez] "In this regard, too, Havanatur plays an important role in moving tourists to Cuba. We are a sort of spearhead in new and future markets."

Regarding those markets, he has said:

[Hernandez] "For example, a market in which we have been working for a long time is Japan. We also have

Australia, where we started working last year with a [words indistinct] and based on the interest expressed by Australian tour operators. A few Middle East tour operators have also approached us, and we have offered them our services. We now have an incipient market—it is not a future market, because it is rather very old—in the UK; we are also working with a group of agencies from that country.

There are still more. For example, we have the U.S. market itself, where there is a group of [words indistinct] is allowed to travel despite the current restrictions. To further our work, we have fabricated a few promotion sweaters and offer travel specials."

Havanatur managed last year to gross \$100 million, out of which \$13 million were profits.

#### **Cuban Spokesman on Refugees, Haiti, Rights Seminar**

PA0302200496 Havana Radio Havana Cuba  
in Spanish 0000 GMT 2 Feb 96

[Report by Barbara Bethancourt; from the "Evening Information Review" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] Miguel Alfonso, a Foreign Ministry spokesman, confirmed during his regular weekly news conference today that Venezuelan Foreign Minister Miguel Angel Burelli will pay an official visit to Cuba in March. He also confirmed that (Antonio Riplo), governor of the Brazilian state of Rio Grande del Sur, will arrive in Cuba on 9 February on the Cuban parliament's invitation:

[Begin Alfonso recording] We will also receive [words indistinct] governor of South Africa's Transvaal Province, which includes Pretoria and Johannesburg. This visit is scheduled to begin next week. [end recording]

Alfonso also announced that a planeload of Cuban citizens should be arriving in Havana from the naval base that the United States occupies at Guantanamo Bay on 2 February. Washington deemed these Cubans as unacceptable for travel to U.S. territory.

The Foreign Ministry spokesman confirmed that the Cuban Government had received an invitation to Haitian President-elect Rene Preval's inauguration on 7 February:

[Begin Alfonso recording] We received the invitation very recently; in fact, we received it last night. We are considering the invitation and will report to the press once a decision has been made. [end recording]

Alfonso indicated that a seminar sponsored by the Inter-American Human Rights Institute will most likely be held in this capital city:

[Begin Alfonso recording] The seminar will probably be held in Cuba. More information on this issue can be obtained from our comrades at the National Union of Cuban Lawyers. As far as we know, the National Union of Cuban Lawyers and the Inter-American Human Rights Institute are coordinating this event. This institute is very well known throughout Latin America, particularly in Central America. This is part of a co-operation process with the institute that has been going on for several years now. I have even visited the institute thanks to an invitation received about 10 years ago or maybe more. Some Cuban officials have even participated in seminars and taken advantage of the grants sponsored by this institution. In other words, there is excellent cooperation with the Inter-American Human Rights Institute. [end recording]

#### **Commentary Views Departure of Cubans from Guantanamo**

PA0402200196 Havana Radio Havana Cuba  
in Spanish 0000 GMT 4 Feb 96

["Radio Havana Cuba Commentary" from the "Evening Information Review" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] In the middle of this week the last 158 Cubans who were housed in the U.S. Guantanamo Naval Base left for the United States, thus putting an end to the improvised camp where over 30,000 persons who left their country in recent years were crowded into. The chief causes of this phenomenon are the economic limitations Cuba is still suffering, as it has been economically blockaded by the United States for the past 34 years. This situation became acutely worse when the Soviet Union and other eastern European socialist countries, with which Cuba conducted almost all of its foreign commerce, disappeared. Also housed in that U.S. military enclave in Cuban territory were approximately 20,000 Haitians who had fled their country aboard rickety rafts headed for the United States. In addition to the economic reasons that still exist in the poorest country in America, they were fleeing the brutal repression of the last military regime in that country. Cuba, however, has begun to stabilize its economy through an effective internal readjustment and the heroic efforts by its hard-working people. The aperture of the economy to foreign investment, in cooperation with the Cuban state, an adequate realignment of the productive system, and, above all, the will of the majority the people, who have a heartfelt commitment to move the country out of the crisis, while preserving their independence and sovereignty based on the socialist system, are

beginning to yield positive results. The United States, as well as Cuba, have scrupulously kept the immigration agreements that are being implemented since late 1994, when the illegal immigration of Cubans to the United States became greater in makeshift rafts that led to many regrettable accidents.

Those immigration agreements that delegations from the two countries review periodically stipulate that the U.S. government will cease to offer special facilities to persons who emigrate to Cuba and serve the political propaganda opposed to the Cuban revolution and that it will return to the island anyone who illegally emigrates to the United States. Cuba, in turn, pledged not to apply sanctions on those persons and allow them to return to the country. The two things have been kept, a situation that has noticeably contributed to put an end to the regrettable situation that took place in the Guantanamo Base.

#### **Cuba's Raul Castro Presides Over Military Council**

PA0202222596 Havana Cubavision Network  
in Spanish 0100 GMT 31 Jan 96

[Report by Mario Rivera and Marta Moreno; from the "NTV" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] General of the Army Raul Castro attended a military council at the Central Army headquarters, a meeting that was presided over by Division Gen. Joaquin Quintas Sola, commander of the Central Army.

The results obtained by the Central Army in 1995 were the most significant in the past three years, Castro, who is also FAR [Revolutionary Armed Forces] minister, said during the Central Army's first military council. Staff members and noncommissioned officers completed the regular troops' preparedness for defense programs. More than 1 million members of the MTT [Territorial Troops Militia] and production and defense brigades received the required training.

A large number of students participated in the initial training. In addition, 214 zones of the 339 existing ones were declared ready for the second stage of the defense. Preparation of the terrain by engineers and the extended implementation of methods and protection of armament were consolidated. In the territory covered by the Central Army, 162 million trees were planted last year. Agricultural activities increased in all fields; the production of vegetables doubled; and the production of tubers, beef, and freshwater fish increased. Progress in the economic compatibility of green pastures was pointed out.

The main analysis focused on the urgent need to ensure self-sufficiency in municipalities, which is so necessary both in times of war and peace.

The officers reported that the Granma exercise proved to be an important advance, but that the detected problems must be solved quickly. An assessment was made of the use of natural medicine [medicina verde] and alternate methods. In the speeches, the areas that need work to obtain better results were mentioned. Ricardo Santillas, president of the People's Power Assembly in Sancti Spiritus Province, reported on the status of the fulfillment of recommendations made by Politburo members during a recent visit.

The finance and prices minister gave details on the province's financial situation, and the fishery minister reported on the FAR's aquaculture activities. In the council, the Central Army's winning internal emulation units in 1995 were announced. Gen. Castro said that emulation in the armies has been improving and has had positive repercussions in the three commands' results to the extent that it will be difficult to determine which is the best in the near future.

#### **Cuban Oil Producers Pledge Higher Production in 1996**

PA0302013296 Havana Radio Rebelde Network  
in Spanish 1800 GMT 30 Jan 96

[Report by Jesus Diaz Loyola; from the "National Radio News" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] In Matanzas, Basic Industry Minister Marcos Portal acknowledged the reactivation of Cuban oil production. Oil producers from the Oil Drilling and Extracting Enterprise of Central Cuba [EPEPC] are working hard to achieve a production goal of 1.085 million metric tons of crude for this year.

[Begin Diaz recording] During his address at EPEPC's annual report in Cardenas, the EPEPC's director stressed the 1995 production of 1.075 million metric tons, which represents one of EPEPC's largest amounts of production in recent years. EPEPC was the largest oil producer at a time when Cuba surpassed a production of 1.4 million metric tons of crude, which made it possible to generate 34 percent of electricity production, all cement production, and other products.

Basic Industry Minister Portal announced here the availability of some resources in the Havana and Santiago de Cuba oil refineries that will help to alleviate this year's domestic fuel deficit.

In a letter addressed to Commander in Chief Fidel Castro, EPEPC workers restated their unalterable commit-

ment to achieving this year's goal, which represents 80 percent of national oil production. [end recording]

#### **Cuban Government Increases Quantity of Land Grants**

PA0402034396 Havana PRENSA LATINA in Spanish  
2235 GMT 30 Jan 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Havana, 30 Jan (PL) — The local media have reported that in accordance with the agricultural reforms, which began in 1993, the Cuban Government has increased the quantity of land granted to people interested in sowing it.

In Camaguey Province, located 533 kilometers from the capital, 6,000 hectares of land were transferred today to peasants organized in the Basic Cooperative Production Units (UBPC) for their use, free of charge, and for an indefinite period of time.

According to LA AGENCIA DE INFORMACION NACIONAL, the Agriculture Ministry Division of Camaguey has authorized approximately 11,000 petitions of land that would benefit 19,600 new tobacco and coffee growers. These products are the main sources of exports in the country.

This initiative is in response to the accord of the Politburo of the Communist Party of Cuba (PCC), which in September 1993 introduced innovations to the state agriculture such as the creation of UBPCs to increase the production of food from the fields.

#### **Cuban Meeting Held To Assess Production in Cienfuegos**

PA0402160096 Havana Tele Rebelde and Cubavision Networks in Spanish 0100 GMT 28 Jan 96

[From the "NTV" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] An expanded meeting of the Turquino National Plan was held in the city of Cienfuegos, Cienfuegos Province.

[Begin recording] [Reporter Omar George] This meeting wrapped up the control activities the commission carried out in seven El Llano Municipalities and all of the mountainous regions of the country's central region. Several ministers and top local Communist Party of Cuba and government leaders participated in the analysis. They learned that coffee yields remain low, although this is a vital product in the economy of this mountain region. Inadequacies in the agricultural and technical work, development of the new type farm (granja de nuevo tipo), and the handing out land in usufruct were the attributable cause. Apicultural production showed results, although it is far from achieving its potential.

Together with coffee, honey constitutes the other major highlands export product.

They assessed forest activity in seven El Llano municipalities. All of them showed difficulties in the overall reforestation program. The Rodas Municipality was the sole exception, as it stood out as an example of good work in the conservation and development of forest resource. In line with the overall nature of this assessment, the participants also studied the result of the rest of the activities of the economy and services in the mountain.

[Agriculture Minister Alfredo Jordan] We have an infinite number of things pending. I believe that 1996 could be the year that, with specific results, specific results [repeats himself], especially in terms of the economic orientation, which will ultimately help resolve the other problems, we will give the response that the Revolutionary Armed Forces minister, Comrade Raul, has been demanding from us for a long time. [end recording]

[George] Practically all the organisms of the economy and services have a mission to carry out with the Turquino-Manati Plan. Contributing to it by posing questions as to how to solve still pending problems seems to be one of the most significant results of the control meetings, as this one that just concluded in the country's central region. [end recording]

#### **Cuban Minister Predicts Continued Economic Growth**

PA0402163696 Havana Radio Havana Cuba  
in Spanish 0000 GMT 4 Feb 96

[From the "Evening Information Review" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] Economy and Planning Minister Jose Luis Rodriguez has affirmed in Davos, Switzerland, that his country will maintain the state role in those two [as heard] major strategic spheres of society. In remarks to newsmen covering the 26th World Economic Forum in that city, Rodriguez predicted economic growth in Cuba will range between 2.5 percent to 5 percent in the next three years, if one considers the recovery phase the country is experiencing. Commenting on the foreign investment law approved last year, the official said the country must legislate based on the experience it acquires. Rodriguez, who is also vice president of the Council of Ministers, reiterated in Davos that the Caribbean nation has not renounced the socialist ideal of social solidarity, justice, and equal opportunities in employment, education, and culture. Rodriguez participated yesterday in a debate on the process of economic reforms in the island nation held during a banquet attended by guests interested in learning about the topic.

**Cuba's Blas Rocas Contingent Discusses 1995 Problems**

PA0402183996 Havana Radio Havana Cuba  
in Spanish 0000 GMT 4 Feb 96

[Report by Ana Maura Carbo from the "Evening Information Review" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] The difficulties the Blas Rocas Contingent had last year were related to deficient control norms, which are the ideal repository of productivity and technical preparation of its builders. An assembly was held based on these topics. In talking of economic efficiency, Domingo Rivo of the 25th Brigade, said:

[Begin Rivo recording] Despite the hard work to have an efficient economy, we regret to say that we must continue rating our labor force as poor. [end recording]

The topic of the (?alteration) of the construction sequence, owing to losses it entails, was also brought up. [Cuban Workers Federation President] Pedro Ross had this to add:

[Begin Ross recording] The problems that are not resolved when the project begins later forces workers to intercalate one kind of work with another. In a construction project, this can be done — in some cases — but we must avoid it. We must have a logical sequence, or else this situation, as well as others, leads to losses. [end recording]

The (?Rocas Contingent) workers said stated that one must be more demanding of the investors and project builders. In this aspect, Carlos Lage [vice president of the Council of State] said:

[Begin Lage recording] I think that as the investment process, the quality of constructions, and the completion of the constructions improve, [words indistinct] the demand by the builder to the investors, those, responsible for the project, that the necessary organizational conditions be created so that the construction fulfill its purpose becomes very important. [end recording]

The weak points are coming to the fore, and considering how extensive the debate is, solutions are expected to come out of it.

**Cuba's Pinar del Rio's Honey 'Very Much Below' Potential**

PA0202162896 Havana Radio Rebelde Network  
in Spanish 1800 GMT 31 Jan 96

[Report by Jose Cabrera Peinado; from the "National Radio News" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] Engineer Lazaro Alvarez, director of the Pinar del Rio apiculture center, expressed

dissatisfaction because he admits that what was accomplished — 302 tons of honey — is very much below the territory's potential, which in 1985 managed to collect 1,000 tons of honey.

The leader said, however, that the center he heads firmly intends to repeat the record honey collection figure in 1998 and maintain productive stability from that date onward.

Work is currently underway to increase by approximately 4,000 the number of beehives and surpass the 16,000 beehives that existed in 1985, which became deteriorated by 50 percent.

**Cuban Maisi Coffee Collection Beats National Record**

PA0202163096 Havana Radio Rebelde Network  
in Spanish 1800 GMT 31 Jan 96

[Report by Jose Mejia Osorio; from the "National Radio News" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] Up to now all municipalities, except Guantanamo, have complied with their coffee collection estimates, with special notice going to Maisi, where residents and mobilized forces have collected more than 1.034 million cans of coffee and continue collecting, making them the largest producers in all the national territory.

Parallel to the coffee harvest that is about to end here in Guantanamo, cultivation is taking place in areas already planted, where 11 percent of the estimated 964 caballerias of traditional coffee are expected to be renewed this year, which are of very low yield. In addition, 30 new caballerias will be planted.

Likewise, there are plans to increase the number of plants per caballeria until production surpasses 40,000 cans in Arabic variety and 20,000 in robust [robusta] variety. Also a priority task for Guantanamo coffee growers this year is to comply with soil preservation programs through the use of natural and man-made barriers, and once the next harvest gets started, remove the pulp from over 1.8 million cans, guaranteeing that over 80 percent of what is collected will be benefited.

**Cuba's Havana Radio Workers Pledge To Inform People**

PA0202180796 Havana Radio Rebelde Network  
in Spanish 1800 GMT 30 Jan 96

[From the "National Radio News"]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Station announcer Cesar Arredondo] In its yearly balance the Havana Province

radio workers spoke in favor of continuing to inform the people with greater depth and analysis about the country's transformations and efforts. Here is Ulises Hernandez Ortiz.

[Begin recording] [Ortiz] The Havana Provincial Office sent its congratulations to the Havana radio artists, technicians, and journalists and urged them to continue informing the people, placing a greater emphasis now on the analysis and explanation of the situation and transformations that are taking place in the country in economic and productive areas. Addressing five directors of local radio stations, distinguished workers, and other leaders, Rebeca Ruiz, a member of the aforementioned political organism, pointed to the achievements attained in the province's radio system, and said that there must be greater ties between the radio stations in the municipalities and the central radio, Radio Cadena Havana. In assessing the technological equipment, stress was placed on maintenance, a work that is currently being done in little systematic fashion, and it was reported the next five years the country plans to acquire advanced technology and equipment.

The country plans to use computer applications and compact disks for the radio station's audio work and installation of amplifying equipment. At the annual assessment in Havana, it was disclosed that the head station, Cadena Havana, will soon move its headquarters to (J-15) in El Vedado, which will benefit communications. It was also announced that everything is ready to launch the radio festival in San Jose de Las Lajas from 10 to 24 February.

#### **Report Views Cuban Population Growth, Birth Rate**

PA0302014196 Havana Radio Havana Cuba  
in Spanish 1800 GMT 31 Jan 96

[Report by Mariela Diaz; from the "Morning Information Review" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] Up until this past 31 December, Cuba's population stood at 10,997,000, and it should surprise no one if one of these days I myself announce that we have finally reached 11 million.

Even though, during the past few years, the number of births in our country has tended to decline for various reasons, such as the economic crisis, the high educational and social level, and the inclination toward small families, the number of births during 1995 was not that few, and 147,000 births were reported, a trend similar to the year 1994.

Juan Carlos Alfonso, a research specialist with the Demographic Department of the National Office of

Statistics, commented that in Cuba many associate the low birth rate with the economic crisis. However, long before the special period the island had already been exhibiting a demographic pattern similar to those in industrialized nations, the main feature of which is a low birth and death rate.

Economic and social changes exert a very strong influence on the population and thus on the demographic pattern, so that when the population begins to experience an economic recovery in Cuba, not at the macroeconomic level, but really begins to perceive it in the family nucleus, it is very likely that birth rates will begin to increase.

At any rate, Cuba's population might never reach 12 million, since a recent forecast claims that due to the aging process of the population, by the year 2000, the population will probably stand at 11,147,000, and that 16 percent will most likely be close to 60 years of age.

#### **Cuban Commission Views Valley, Mountain Municipalities**

PA0302023596 Havana Tele Rebelde and Cubavision  
Networks in Spanish 0100 GMT 28 Jan 96

[Report by Omar Jioge from the "NTV" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] A meeting of the expanded National Turquino Manati Commission was held in Cienfuegos today.

[Reporter Omar Jioge] This meeting concluded an evaluation by the commission of seven valley municipalities and of the mountain area municipalities in Cuba's central region. Several ministers and members of provincial governments and the Communist Party of Cuba participated in the meeting.

It was announced that coffee production, the mountain area's fundamental economic sector, is still low. The causes of the low production are inefficiencies in agricultural techniques, the development of new types of farms, and the concession of lands in usufruct, but the honey production sector has obtained some results, even though still far from its true potential. This product and coffee are the area's most important exports.

Lumbering was evaluated in seven valley municipalities. Difficulties in the reforestation program were noted in all municipalities, except in the municipality of Rodas, Cienfuegos Province, which was praised due to the good work in conserving and developing its forestry sector.

All other results derived from the mountain area's economic and service activities were broached:

[Begin unidentified speaker recording] I believe 1996 could be the year of true results, particularly in the

economic area, which is the one that will contribute to the solution of problems. I believe we should respond in 1996 to what the Revolutionary Armed Forces minister, Comrade Raul, has been wanting for quite some time. [end recording]

[Jioge] Virtually all economic and service organizations have responsibilities in the Turquino Manati program, contributing to its cohesion and solving still pending problems. This seems to be one of the most significant outcomes of these evaluations as the one that has just concluded in Cuba's central region.

#### **Cuban Commentary Views 'Scourge' of Prostitution**

PA0302025896 Havana Radio Reloj Network  
in Spanish 2040 GMT 28 Jan 96

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] We have no right to wait. There are several social problems we must broach today. Obviously, modern times bring about new scourges. From a legal viewpoint, we are still unprepared to successfully fight certain crimes, but we cannot cross our arms and ignore corruption, a lack of social discipline, and pimping. We do not need to be prophets to perceive that economic crimes, corruption, and similar problems will increase in coming years. New circumstances, understandably so, will compel us to look for new methods and laws and more dynamic measures to fight crime. We have no right to wait.

The scourge called prostitution. Who has not had a bitter feeling when looking at young prostitutes? It is worth noting that this morally reprehensible activity is not limited to women. There are also young males willing to sell affection or pleasure in exchange for dollars. The situation is much too complex to be addressed in just a few minutes. There are many issues and causes involved, the economic situation among them. There are also other problems stemming from the various individual views when reacting to certain situations. Something has failed in the moral upbringing of those who choose to prostitute themselves to survive in the midst of the crisis.

We cannot just cross our arms. Cuban society must not ignore certain problems, specially when there are underlying moral causes.

The magazine BOHEMIA interviewed Attorney General Juan Escalona Reguera recently, and he said prostitution is punished nowhere in the world [words indistinct] arsenal to intervene, but there are those who profit from prostitution; that is, the pimps and people who rent places to facilitate this behavior, which is not a crime but not a social virtue either. Escalona's statement suggests

coming measures to attack those who exploit prostitution.

The zeal to fight the scourge called prostitution has led to strong steps. During his interview with BOHEMIA, Escalona added that his office will propose the seizure and confiscation of places rented out for prostitution. Regarding pimps, Escalona said they are being punished with the same sentences that are common worldwide; that is, up to 10-12 years in jail for making a living off prostitutes.

We trust that the Cuban judicial system will soon have the answers to harshly fight the scourge of prostitution.

#### **Cuban Politburo Members' Activities Through 1 Feb**

PA0202142696

[FBIS Report] The following is a compilation of reports on the activities of Cuban Communist Party Central Committee Politburo members monitored through 1 February.

Vice President Carlos Lage has described the ongoing sugar cane harvest and the latest results of the tourism industry in Cuba as good. In statements to the media, Lage said Cuba has shown its capacity to resist and to move forward. The sugar industry plays a decisive role in the country's economic recovery because nearly 500,000 people work in that industry. Finally, he said that 84 sugar mills and 10 foreign banks and companies have been involved in the financing of this industry in various forms. (Havana Radio Havana Cuba in Spanish 1300 GMT 22 Jan 96)

Jose Ramon Machado Ventura and Esteban Lazo attended a ceremony to celebrate the anniversary of the General Calixto Garcia Hospital. They also inaugurated a ward and an organ donor center there. (Havana Cubavision Network in Spanish 0100 GMT 24 Jan 96)

The president of the Catalanian Democratic Union met with Jose Ramon Balaguer on 23 January following a meeting with Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina. (Havana Cubavision Network in Spanish 0100 GMT 24 Jan 96)

Esteban Lazo and Victoria Velasquez, first secretary of the Union of Young Communists, attended a meeting to discuss the organization of the march of the torches to commemorate Jose Marti's birthday. (Havana Tele Rebelde and Cubavision Networks in Spanish 0100 GMT 25 Jan 96)

Carlos Lage, Ricardo Alarcon, Concepcion Campa, and Vilma Espin, president of the Federation of Cuban Women, headed the Second National Methodology

Meeting, in which precise measures were adopted aimed at increasing the population's health level during 1996. (Havana Cubavision Network in Spanish 0100 GMT 26 Jan 96)

Yadira Garcia Vera presided over the creation of a farmers contingent in Matanzas, who will form three cooperatives to produce tubers and vegetables. The primary objective is to harvest more than 400,000 quintals of tubers and vegetables. (Havana Cubavision Network in Spanish 0100 GMT 27 Jan 96)

Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina, Culture Minister Armando Hart, and Jose Ramon Balaguer attended the ceremony in which the 10th Jose Marti journalism awards were handed out. (Havana Cubavision Network in Spanish 0100 GMT 27 Jan 96)

Fidel Castro received members of the jury of the House of the Americas Literature Contest at the Palace of the Revolution on 26 January. Also present were Carlos Lage, Ricardo Alarcon, and Culture Minister Armando Hart. (Havana PRENSA LATINA in Spanish 1558 GMT 27 Jan 96)

Carlos Lage praised in Matanzas the enthusiasm with which the community will be marking Jose Marti's birthday on 28 January. Lage visited the marketplace in downtown Matanzas. He met with private and state producers and said he was pleased to see they were able to increase their production. Lage was accompanied by Yadira Garcia Vera. (Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1800 GMT 27 Jan 96)

Fidel Castro placed a flower wreath on Jose Marti's tomb in Santiago de Cuba to mark the Cuban forefather's birthday. Jose Ramon Machado Ventura presided

the ceremony. (Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish 2030 GMT 28 Jan 96)

Thousands of Cubans participated in the traditional torch march to celebrate Jose Marti's 143d birthday. Fidel and Raul Castro opened the celebrations in Havana's Revolution Plaza on 27 January. (Havana Radio Havana Cuba in Spanish 0000 GMT 29 Jan 96)

Jose Ramon Machado Ventura visited six sugarcane-producing municipalities in Santiago de Cuba Province on 27 and 28 January. Machado was always accompanied by Juan Carlos Robinson, first secretary of the Communist Party in the province. Machado said great efforts need to be made not only to increase sugar cane production, but also to improve quality. (Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1800 GMT 29 Jan 96)

Abel Prieto and Culture Minister Armando Hart presided over the ceremonies in Revolution Plaza in Havana on 29 January to commemorate the 143d anniversary of national hero Jose Marti. (Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1800 GMT 29 Jan 96)

Raul Castro attended an event in Sancti Spiritus to open the Central Army's academic year. Castro said there are many problems in Cuba because of shortages, however, there has been a slight economic recovery. (Havana Radio Havana Cuba in Spanish 0000 GMT 30 Jan 96)

Jose Ramon Machado Ventura attended a meeting with Communist Party cadres as well as with mass organizations in Santiago de Cuba. Participants reviewed achievements and deficiencies of the party in the territory in 1995. (Havana Radio Havana Cuba in Spanish 0000 GMT 30 Jan 96)

**Mexico Concerned With U.S. Illegal Immigrant Strategy**

PA0302034096 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish  
0233 GMT 1 Feb 96

[By Alejandro Viveros]

[FBIS Translated Text] Ottawa, 31 Jan (NOTIMEX) — Mexico today expressed its concern about the U.S. strategy against illegal immigrants, which could be intensified as the November presidential elections draw near.

During an interview with NOTIMEX, Enrique Loaeza Tovar, general director for protection and consular affairs at the Mexican Foreign Secretariat, said "the toughening of U.S. migration control measures is a matter of deep concern to us."

He said the anti-immigration issue has become a central part of the political agenda of the U.S. presidential election scheduled for November and could entail tougher measures. Nevertheless, Loaeza said the toughening "has not violated," to a great extent, Mexicans' human and labor rights, according to reports received recently by the Foreign Secretariat and prepared by the Mexican consulates in those communities located along the border.

He said the Mexican Government's "forceful presence" along the border with the United States with a view to defending its citizens from possible abuses has resulted in a decline in the number of complaints of human rights violations.

The Mexican Foreign Secretariat official said the institution last year had received 30 complaints of human rights violations, an amount considerably less than during 1994.

In his opinion, the phenomenon can be attributed to the "forceful presence" of the Mexican Government to defend its citizens through its 40 consulates in the United States, particularly those located along the border region.

Nevertheless, the official said Mexican consular missions have already started to bolster protection measures so as to prevent the impact caused by a possible toughening of U.S. measures against illegal immigrants.

Mexican consulates have bolstered operations by extending working hours since the beginning of the month, when the U.S. Government announced it would increase surveillance along the border to halt the flow of illegal immigrants.

"Oddly enough, Operation Guardian along the San Diego-Tijuana border and operation "Safe Guard" have

created a climate of tension in the area, but we have not detected any increase in severe violations of the rights and dignity of our compatriots," Loaeza said.

He said Mexican authorities are continuously discussing the immigration issue with the United States "at the highest levels," during the binational meeting, between the cabinets of both countries, as well as with the bilateral group on migration and consular issues.

On the deployment of troops along the border to support operations carried out by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) within the framework of a new anti-immigrant strategy, Loaeza said "that matter is causing much concern to the Mexican Government." He added, nevertheless, the measure should be viewed as what it really is, given it is not a militarization as such but, rather, the mere presence of the National Guard.

"The U.S. immigration authorities have assured us that the presence of troops is intended to provide logistical support and that will they take part in no way in the arrest or detention of illegal immigrants," he said.

As for the "National Christian Coalition," which has summoned its militia to gather in San Diego to protest against immigration, Loaeza said "police and repressive measures will not solve the problem."

"The Mexican Government has rejected and will continue to systematically and strongly reject these measures," because although the United States has every right to control its border, "this in no way means it can violate the rights of immigrants."

The migration phenomenon is a structural, bilateral problem with economic, social, and cultural implications, the Mexican official said.

"Unilateral decisions lead nowhere and only serve to confound the spirit of good neighborliness and goodwill existing between our two countries," he added.

Meanwhile, he said the Mexican Government will continue working with Mexican society and civilian organizations as well as with Mexicans in the United States to guarantee their rights, regardless of their migration status.

"At the consulates, we are not asking whether it is a Mexican national with or without documents to begin operating the mechanisms of protection, defense, and justice. There is a commitment to provide support," Loaeza said.

**Mexico 'Does Not Accept' U.S. Certification in Drug War**

PA0202133396 Mexico City LA JORNADA  
in Spanish 1 Feb 96 p 6

[Report by David Aponte]

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Relations Secretariat (SRE) sources stated yesterday that the Mexican Government "does not accept the certification" issued by the U.S. President regarding its drug-trafficking campaign, because since 1992, it has not received any conditioned assistance in this area, and deems it a "radical and aberrant" act the fact that the National Guard is patrolling the border with California to curb the flow of illegal aliens.

According to the sources, the legislation approved by California's state legislature for members of the National Guard to control the traffic of illegal aliens is part of the anti-immigration climate and the political game being experienced by the United States.

In a brief statement at the facilities of the SRE, Foreign Relations Under Secretary Sergio Gonzalez Galvez noted that the initiative submitted by U.S. Senators Alfonse D'Amato and Dianne Feinstein demonstrate "not even an electoral attitude, but their eagerness to obtain votes," to which Mexico responded in the appropriate manner.

Galvez said that the presentation of the bill by the senators, who seek to stop the extension of the financial aid package to Mexico for another six months is entirely "false" and does not have Washington's support.

The U.S. senators, a Republican and a Democrat, also announced the presentation of a separate resolution in which they will demand that President Bill Clinton denies Mexico's certification for its cooperation in the fight on drugs, as well as another initiative designed to hinder the implementation of the bilateral agreement on cargo transportation along the border until the Mexican authorities improve their security measures in this area.

Asked on the topic of the certification, SRE sources indicated that Mexico does not receive any type of aid from Washington to fight drug trafficking: "therefore, it has not been subject to nor has it accepted assistance conditioned to the certification or any other type of matters and inspections."

The Mexican Government is conducting its actions against drug trafficking with its resources and in keeping with its national interests and its sovereignty, they recalled.

In addition, they said that D'Amato and Feinstein are linking in an "inadmissible" manner NAFTA issues to

the financial aid package and the antidrug certification. "There are voices in Congress itself that even question the true jurisdiction of the Banking Committee, chaired by Alfonse D'Amato, to propose a situation of this sort. The certification takes place within the framework of the report the Executive submits to Congress through the Foreign Relations Committee."

"Then, what we have here is a maneuver with a political-electoral tinge (...) but which is also questionable regarding the approval by other congressional committees," they added.

The consulted sources said that the initiative by the senators will not affect the institutional relation between Mexico and the United States, because it does not stem from either the U.S. Government or the entire Congress.

At night, International Cooperation Under Secretary Javier Trevino said that the Mexican Government operates through the Embassy in Washington and its 40 Consulates in that nation to maintain the dialogue at the highest level with representatives of the White House, and seek solutions to the problems emerging in the bilateral agenda.

Concerning the issue of the National Guard's patrolling on the border with California, the SRE sources recalled that this initiative approved by California's legislature is not new, as it was already part of the anti-immigrant climate in that state.

The proposal, which will have to be approved by the California Senate — which has a Democratic majority — is viewed as "radical and totally aberrant" by the Mexican authorities, because the faculty to control the borders and the flow of immigrants in the United States falls under the jurisdiction of the federal authorities, they added. The SRE sources predicted that the D'Amato-Feinstein proposal and the initiative approved on Tuesday by the California legislature will have a slight possibility to succeed.

**Mexican Claim Against U.S. Truckers Filed Before PRI**

PA0202191496 Mexico City XEW Television Network  
in Spanish 0400 GMT 2 Feb 96

[From the "24 Hours" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] Bernardo Lijszain Bimstein, president of the National Chamber of Land Transportation of Cargo of the Mexican Republic, today filed an accusation before the PRI's [Institutional Revolutionary Party] mass groups. He reported that the permit granted by the Secretariat of Commerce and Industrial Development enabling U.S. truckers to operate in Mexico is illegal.

**Mexico To Defend Mexican Tomato, Avocado Growers**

PA0402034596 Mexico City XEW Television Network  
in Spanish 0400 GMT 30 Jan 96

[Report by Susana Castaneda from the "24 Hours" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Commerce and Industrial Development Secretariat announced today that Mexican authorities will defend the Mexican growers of tomatoes and avocados, the introduction into the United States of which is restricted.

[Castaneda] Although THE WALL STREET JOURNAL published on 29 January that U.S. truckers are already entering Mexico, Raul Ramos Tercero, under secretary of regulations and services for industry and foreign trade, has said this report is false. Ramos has said no U.S. trucker has entered Mexico:

[Begin Ramos recording] This topic is still under discussion by the consultation groups that were established a couple of weeks ago. [end recording]

Ramos has announced that Mexican authorities will continue defending the Mexican growers of tomatoes and avocados against what he has described as improper anti-NAFTA measures imposed by the United States.

**Mexican Official Views Clash With U.S. Over Tomatoes**

PA0502005296 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish  
2130 GMT 31 Jan 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Mexico City, 31 Jan (NOTIMEX) — Mexican Agriculture Secretary Francisco Labastida Ochoa pointed out today that Mexico should make decisions outside the electoral interests of its commercial partners in the conflict with the United States over the marketing of tomatoes.

In a meeting with legislative commissions linked to the agricultural sector, he said that noncompliance with the agreements signed within the framework of NAFTA "is part of the problem of having competitive production."

After senators took the floor to state their views on the national issue, Labastida said that "the issue of the marketing of tomatoes does not comprise the whole spectrum of agricultural issues. It is only one of the marketing problems being discussed."

Since last December, congressmen from the State of Florida have been promoting a bill against Mexican tomatoes, which might also affect the agricultural exports of various countries.

The objective of this bill is to categorize the production of tomatoes and vegetables as a "distinctive industry," in order to receive assistance under the current commercial legislation.

The change would enable the International Commercial Commission, the advisory organization in the cases of commercial disputes, to recommend trade barriers on agricultural exports from Mexico and other countries if it finds local industry is being "harmed."

However, experts believe that, beyond the outcome of this issue, Mexican tomatoes will continue being sold in the United States simply because Florida cannot meet the domestic demand for the product.

At the meeting, the Mexican official stressed that 1995 "was the year to outline an agricultural policy, one in which all of the productive sectors are participating, and the answers are integral."

He added that last year "one of the most thorough change processes ever undertaken in the Mexican countryside was launched."

He also emphasized that in 1995, for the first time in decades, the agricultural balance registered a surplus of \$770 million, while the food balance registered a surplus of \$3.35 billion.

Guillermo Hopkins, president of the Agriculture and Cattle Breeding Commission, warned that "the difficulties being experienced in rural areas do not allow apathetic attitudes or partial solutions, and neither do they admit inaction in hopes of better times."

"It is necessary to move from words to actions and to complement the Alliance for the Countryside with wise and effective policies with reasonable prices for raw materials and plans based upon the payment capability of the producers," he said.

Jose Guadarrama, president of the Agricultural Marketing Commission, asked that the current marketing problem be considered within the order of priorities of the current policy of the agricultural sector.

**Mexico's Salinas Case Keeping Castro Visit on Standby**

PA0402033596 Mexico City PROCESO in Spanish  
29 Jan 96 pp 34, 36

[Report by Homero Campa]

[FBIS Translated Text] Havana — The Carlos Salinas case is keeping Fidel Castro's trip to Mexico on standby. Scheduled for March, it has no set date and could be postponed until April or May, diplomatic sources have told PROCESO.

The reason: Castro cannot expose himself to suspicions that the former Mexican president is residing in Cuba under his protection. The anti-Salinist feelings prevailing in Mexico could create an uncomfortable atmosphere for him.

The fact is that unconfirmed reports have been circulating for three months that Salinas is living in Cuba. Castro himself has admitted before a delegation of Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD) members, headed by party leader Porfirio Munoz Ledo, that the former Mexican president goes in and out of Cuba while exercising his transit rights.

Castro has denied, however, that Salinas is residing permanently on the island and that official protection is being given to him. Castro also has said Salinas is not investing or promoting investments on the island.

Rumors continue despite the statements the Cuban leader made the morning of Friday, the 16th [as published], in one of the rooms of the Palace of the Revolution. The latest: That Salinas is the father of a Cuban baby. According to an account that has reached Mexico, his companion, Ana Paula Girard, gave birth here, but no hospital in Havana has a record of this birth.

During a tour of the diplomatic corps of Pinar del Rio, the province the Mexican media have mentioned as the residing place of the former president, the first secretary of the Communist Party in that province has said Salinas has not been there, and she has challenged anyone to find him.

Diplomatic sources in Havana have said that Ana Paula Girard traveled to Mexico this week and that Salinas is preparing for his departure to a country in northern Europe.

What is happening is that in the relations between Cuba and Mexico, which are always described as "historic and excellent," the Salinas case is already causing discomfort for the Cuban Government.

The issue, like it or not, emerged during the recent visits Mexican politicians have made to Cuba. It emerged in November when Cuauhtemoc Cardenas attended the postmortem award ceremony in which his father, Lazaro Cardenas, was granted the Order of Jose Marti. Castro did not attend the ceremony, which was unusual. A few hours earlier, Cuauhtemoc Cardenas had uttered: "How could a person with interests contrary to those of independent development defended by Cuba come to Cuba?" That, he said, "I would see as an insult to the Mexican people, who on various occasions and with great determination have been supportive of Cuba in the defense of its right to determine its own fate."

It later emerged with the PRD delegation's visit headed by Porfirio Munoz Ledo, who has said "if I find him (Salinas) I will drag him back by his ears."

Munoz did not find him, but before returning to Mexico he told correspondents the Salinas case "will be resolved before the upcoming interparliamentary meeting" between Cuba and Mexico, because otherwise, the topic "would reemerge."

The meeting, the first of its type in the history of both nations, will take place in Havana between 7 and 9 March. The meeting was at the initiative of the PRD but with the approval of the other three parties represented in the Mexican Chamber of Deputies: the PRI [Institutional Revolutionary Party], the PAN [National Action Party], and the PT [Labor Party].

The president of the PRI, Santiago Onate, said upon his arrival in Havana on 26 January that he was unaware of rumors of the presence of Carlos Salinas in Cuba and said the topic would not be discussed in the conversations he would possibly hold with Fidel Castro. "It is not my topic," he said in a news conference.

Onate, who was chief of the Office of the Presidency when he replaced Jose Maria Cordoba, jokingly avoided questions about his former chief's presence on the island: "Did you look for him already? You could have the scoop if you interview him."

#### **Mexican Official: Economy Improved Since Jan 1995**

*PA0202171496 Mexico City XEW Television Network in Spanish 0400 GMT 31 Jan 96*

[From the "24 Hours" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Station announcer Jacobo Zabludovsky] Guillermo Ortiz, finance and public credit secretary spoke, during a news conference held in London of the differences between the Mexico of January 1995 and today. He said that this January he can sleep.

[Begin Ortiz recording] It is a totally different picture. [laughs] One big difference is that we can now sleep. [laughter] The other obvious point is that the markets are responding favorably, as we have seen in recent weeks. The financial markets in Mexico have shown a great deal of stability, the exchange market as well as the money market. The interest rates continue to show a downward trend in line with the inflation predictions for 1995 [as heard]. One big difference is that in January 1996 we are placing [bonds] at a five- or seven-year maturity rate, whereas last January we were watching a significant flight of capital. The difference between this January and the last one, is highly significant, of course.

Last year, we were envisioning.... [pauses] We were on the threshold of a economic recession that did take place and had very strong characteristics, as all of you know. This January we are envisioning economic recovery for 1996. For that reason, the outlook for this year is totally different. [end recording]

[Zabludovsk] The finance and public credit secretary also said that this year's goals for economic growth may be surpassed.

[Begin Ortiz recording] I would like to emphasize something we have stated. It is that the exchange rate of 7.70 pesos to the dollar was included as a reference in the budget, because we must, of course, write some sort of exchange rate to make budget estimates. We have revenues in foreign exchange that basically correspond to oil earnings, and we have foreign debt payments in foreign currency. In other words in preparing the budget, we must estimate the exchange rate to be able to make this conversion. This does not mean this is an exchange rate goal or forecast. This is a point worth explaining from the start.

As for growth forecasts, as we have explained before, we think that the growth estimate is, in fact, conservative, since it is based on 3 percent ... [pauses] based on export growth estimates that are substantially smaller. [end recording]

#### **Meeting Results in Creation of Mexican Political Front**

PA0302043896 Mexico City *EL FINANCIERO*  
in Spanish 30 Jan 96 p 45

[Report by Salvador Rico]

[FBIS Translated Text] Acapulco, Guerrero, 29 January — A new social and political organization, although without the open Zapatist name that had been anticipated, finally began in this port city: The Broad Front for the Construction of the National Liberation Movement. This is the final result of the III Meeting for Unity and National Dialogue.

The new front emerges with the participation of 269 organizations and with the support, among other groups and personalities, of the Zapatist National Liberation Army (EZLN), former presidential candidate Cuauhtemoc Cardenas, and even Joaquin Hernandez Galicia, alias "La Quina," the former oil leader who is in prison.

Among the myriad of social and political blocs comprising the new front are the Union of Organizations of the Southern Sierra, which, under the leadership of PRD (Party of the Democratic Revolution) Deputy Ranferi Hernandez Acevedo, hosted and promoted the Acapulco meeting, the El Barzon Movement, the Indepen-

dent Proletariat Movement, the SUTAU-100 [Single Union of Route 100 Urban Passenger Bus Workers], various provincial groups of the National Democratic Commission, Indian groups, the UAM [Autonomous University of Mexico] Independent Workers Union, various state PRD groups, unregistered parties such as the Socialist Revolutionary, the Emiliano Zapata Union of Commoners, the Free Center of Theater and Artistic Experimentation, Socialist Alternative, and, among the largest delegations, the Democratic State Assembly of the People of Chiapas.

One of the first pronouncements of the new front—Ranferi Hernandez Acevedo made this statement on 29 January in a news conference in the traditional Astoria Cafeteria—was its willingness to march with the political parties that want an immediate and profound change in the economic policy of President Zedillo.

Hernandez Acevedo said the front will include rather than exclude anyone, adding it is open to all political parties.

In the meetings, which began on 27 January and ended at midnight on 28 January in the Continental Plaza, participants agreed the leadership of the new front will be "collective and horizontal" in order to avoid personal leaderships.

One of the immediate agreements was that the peoples mobilizations will be one of the characteristics of the new organization.

In the news conference, Ranferi Hernandez Acevedo, Francisco Mancilla, Anabel Covarrubias, Lilia Vazquez, and Porfirio del Angel disclosed the general agreements of the meeting, the first of which was held in San Cristobal del las Casas, Chiapas.

Among the approved general objectives are giving Mexico a new government and a new Constitution and a 360 degree change in economic policy.

#### **Between the EZLN and Ruben Figueroa**

During the discussion on the name of the organization, which the members of the Provisional Commission for Unity and National Dialogue handled with great care, participants agreed not to heed fully the suggestion made by Subcommander Marcos, who had proposed in a letter read in the first session of the port city meeting the name of Movement for National Liberation.

An immediate and general deduction was that by proposing that name, Marcos sought to avoid the new group being named the Zapatist National Liberation Front. Despite this point, the proposal to name the group the Zapatist National Liberation Front was made at the working tables.

At the time of deciding what to name the new organization, other proposals were examined: The Peoples Resistance National Front, the National Democratic Front, and the National Opposition Front.

In the end, participants chose to combine the proposal made by the EZLN leader with other suggestions.

The decision to increase the mobilizations to have Guerrero State Governor Ruben Figueroa Alcocer tried for the Aguas Blancas killing was an important part of the III Meeting for Unity and National Dialogue, which representatives from support groups in Nicaragua, Peru, and the United States also attended.

In its conclusions, the Acapulco meeting not only questioned Figueroa Alcocer. Participants also demanded the trial of Carlos Hank Gonzalez, Roberto Madrazo Pinedo, Oscar Espinosa Villarreal, Manuel Barlett Diaz, and the members of the "Salinas clan."

Regarding the great mobilizations planned, it was first decided to schedule three: on 18 March, 10 April, and 1 May. The first mobilization will be convened to protest the sale of petrochemical plants.

It was agreed that the first meeting of the front will be held in Oaxaca. Ranferi Hernandez Acevedo explained the necessary establishment of the front as follows:

"Our country is experiencing a crisis caused by the neoliberal policies of an unpopular, undemocratic, and pro-imperialist administration that has left thousands of workers unemployed, thereby increasing the ranks of those individuals who are no longer living in poverty but are now living in misery, while at the same time the violations of human rights guaranteed by the Constitution have become more evident and generalized."

"The aforementioned indicate the need to create a national, political organization into which converge all the organizations, trends, and personalities that are struggling to end the neo-liberal policies oppressing and exploiting us and which will lead us to install an economic system based on fellowship between human beings and the fair distribution of wealth."

Another agreement consists of sending the results of the meeting to Amnesty International and the Organization of American States "to expose the administration's constant violations of human rights in Mexico."

Ranferi Hernandez Acevedo affirmed that the Broad Front for the Construction of the National Liberation Movement will persevere in its aims despite the obstacles the administration is planning to impose.

#### Report Details Auction of Mexican Treasury Certificates

PA0402040896 Mexico City Radio Red Network  
in Spanish 0000 GMT 31 Jan 96

[Report by Antonio Guzman; from "The Night Monitor" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] A CETES [Treasury Certificates] auction was held this afternoon, and the behavior of these debt instruments was dissimilar. It was dissimilar because there was a decrease only in the leading rate, the 28-day rate, and the decrease involved only 0.80 percent; therefore, this debt instrument had a yield of 36.43 percent.

The remaining three types included in the auction had a small increase. The 91-day CETES increased only 0.02 percent and is currently 38.39 percent. The 182-day CETES increased 0.62 percent and will pay 39.81 percent, while the one-year CETES went up 0.58 percent and will pay 40.61 percent. The CETES auction this Tuesday was dissimilar.

The Finance Secretariat announced today that the Mexican Government today placed its first issuance of debt bonds in dollars at the New York market, the first one since 1 February 1994. The placement of this type of foreign currency had not been made in all this time. The current placement totaled \$1 billion with a five-year term.

According to the Finance Secretariat, this operation reflects the increasing recovery of Mexico's image among international investors, given the economy's evolution. The bonds will pay a fixed rate of 9.75 percent, equivalent to the U.S. Treasury bonds, with a five-year term plus 4.45 points.

In addition, this placement in international markets had to be increased from \$750 million to \$1 billion, given the good acceptance it registered. This placement will be carried out by international financial organizations such as Merrill Lynch.

The Finance Secretariat stated that with this placement, it will continue the debt refinancing policy; that is, the replacement of a short-term debt with a long-term debt that guarantees more advantages given the rates paid in these long terms.

### El Salvador

#### Salvadoran Minister: No U.S. 'Massive Deportations'

PA0402042296 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish  
2225 GMT 26 Jan 96

[FBIS Translated Text] San Salvador, 26 Jan (NOTIMEX) — At least 127,000 Salvadorans living in the United States have filed requests for political asylum at the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service in that country, the Salvadoran Foreign Ministry announced today.

According to estimates on the number of illegal Salvadorans in the United States, approximately 60,000 must still file the request to avail themselves of the ABC, a temporary protection program for illegal immigrants who entered the United States up to 1990.

Government authorities are hoping that 60,000 Salvadorans who have not yet registered will fill out the application forms before 31 January, the deadline for filing the request; otherwise, they would run the risk of being deported.

The ABC will guarantee Salvadorans who request it the automatic renewal of their work permits and will initiate the process to determine whether they meet the requirements for political asylum.

According to Foreign Minister Ramon Gonzalez Giner, even though the legalization of the status of those Salvadorans is not guaranteed, the mere fact they have filed an application is a "great relief for the country."

During the last few years, income obtained through remittances sent by Salvadorans living in the United States to their relatives have represented for El Salvador the second leading source of revenue. Resources for more than \$970 million reached the country in 1995 alone.

According to Gonzalez, the paperwork for each individual case will take between four and five years, which would delay for some time the danger of a deportation.

The foreign minister said no massive deportations will take place for the time being, because the U.S. Government has promised not to do it, but the United States has made it clear that any illegal immigrant from El Salvador or from any other country who is caught will be deported.

#### Salvadoran Businessmen on Mexican Compliance With Accord

PA0402232196 San Salvador EL DIARIO DE HOY  
in Spanish 3 Feb 96 p 14

[Report by Ingrid Rodas]

[FBIS Translated Text] Businessmen have recommended that the government present a firm position during the upcoming presidential meeting with Mexico, in order for Mexico to fulfill trade concessions established in the Tuxtla I agreements.

"What is important is for Mexico to fulfill its share of the agreements. Furthermore, the future 'Tuxtla Gutierrez II' agreements should be based on Tuxtla I and have a follow-up mechanism established," said Alfredo Milian, executive director of the office of textile quota monitoring of the Salvadoran Association of Industrialists.

At Tuxtla I, the Central American countries and Mexico established reciprocal commercial concessions in accordance with the agreements of partial extent, amending protocols, and other tariff mechanisms in force.

The Central American and Mexican presidents will meet on 15 and 16 February in Costa Rica to discuss issues such as direct and joint investment, trade, and possible reactivation of the negotiations to establish a NAFTA with Mexico.

In a letter to Economy Minister Eduardo Zablah on 29 January, the businessmen pointed to the convenience of holding a meeting to evaluate trade relations between Mexico and the Northern Triangle at Tuxtla II.

The businessmen noted the business sector should have an active participation in the meeting. They also recommended a preparatory meeting of the Northern Triangle.

This week, the Central American foreign and economy ministers held meetings and established points to be discussed by the presidents.

The officials held meetings with regional institutions in order to come to specific positions to be included in the Tuxtla II summit document.

Milian believes that one of the most important points to be tackled by the presidents at the meeting is Mexico's compliance with the Tuxtla I accords, regarding the creation of a Free Trade Agreement of the Americas (FTAA).

Milian believes the Central American countries, especially El Salvador, have allowed enough opening to

Mexican products, as was agreed on in the Tuxtla I meeting of presidents.

"On the contrary, after Mexico suffered an economic and political crisis, it has increased its protectionist measures and non-tariff barriers, which are some of the factors causing market distortions in Central America and El Salvador," said Milian.

#### **Growing Commercial Deficit**

In the letter sent to Zablah, the businessmen noted that Mexican protectionism has resulted in a fast-growing commercial deficit between Mexico and the Northern Triangle of more than \$300 million in favor of Mexico.

"Mexico's trade surplus includes a variety of products, such as raw materials, assembly parts, and finished products that denote an absence of tariff and non-tariff barriers in the Northern Triangle," wrote the businessmen in the letter.

According to ASI executive director Jorge Arriaza, at trade negotiations between Mexico and the Northern Triangle, the latter wished the atmosphere of Tuxtla I prevailed in trade relations between the parties.

Arriaza said the liberalization agreed on in Tuxtla should be the starting point of negotiations with Mexico, but that negotiations should also discuss honoring the commercial concessions established in accordance with the agreements of partial extent, amending protocols, and other tariff mechanisms in force.

"It is important to mention that Mexico has gradually increased the number of exclusions to Tuxtla I. This has resulted in a reduction of benefits. Mexico has used these exclusions to justify the insertion of relative reciprocity, as an important factor in all areas of negotiations between Mexico and the Northern Triangle," said Arriaza.

On the other hand, the Northern Triangle has maintained an accelerated process of trade liberalization, "lifting tariff and non-tariff barriers, as was the case when in June 1996 [date as published], a uniform tariff on raw materials and 15 percent on all other products was established. [quotation marks as published]"

Likewise, no specific restrictions on foreign corporations in the service and investment areas were established; thus, they receive national treatment.

"If no change is made, this seems to be an unfair trade distortion that greatly affects the industrial sector of the Northern Triangle. These countries do not have the regulatory and institutional mechanisms for legal protection as established by the WTO," said Arriaza.

He believes that Mexico's reconfirmation that it will comply with the commercial concessions established in Tuxtla represent, on the one hand, an action of reciprocity in response to the "indiscriminative and unilateral" trade opening established by the Northern Triangle that has made it possible for Mexico to reach its present trade surplus.

"It is also a gesture of goodwill to facilitate the negotiations, which were interrupted in 1994," Arriaza noted.

#### **Guatemala**

##### **Guatemala's Arzu Reported Back in Capital After Attack**

*PA0502022196 Guatemala City Cadena de Emisoras Unidas in Spanish 0130 GMT 5 Feb 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] Guatemalan President Alvaro Arzu Irigoyen has reportedly returned to the Guatemalan capital by air along with General Marco Tulio Espinoza Contreras, chief of the presidential staff, and is with his family at his El Salvador Route residence, government palace sources have reported.

Deputy Government Minister Mario Rene Cifuentes has ordered agents to intensify their investigations in the wake of an assassination attempt against President Alvaro Enrique Arzu Irigoyen as he was horseback riding along Tanque de la Union Street near the ruins of Santa Clara in Antigua Guatemala.

Presidential Spokesman Ricardo de la Torre Jimeno is at the presidential residence where President Alvaro Arzu Irigoyen was taken for his own safety, and in a few moments a press communique will be issued, according to National Palace sources.

##### **Guatemalan Bodyguard Kills Attacker; Conference Expected**

*PA0502024296 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 0151 GMT 5 Feb 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] Guatemala City, 4 Feb (NOTIMEX) — On 4 February, Guatemalan President Alvaro Arzu escaped unscathed from an alleged attack in which his presumed attacker was killed by three gunshots, Deputy Government Minister Rene Cifuentes reported on the evening of 4 February.

The attack, which has not yet been clarified, occurred when the Guatemalan president (who has not yet been in office for even a month) was in the colonial city of Antigua Guatemala, 45 km south of the Guatemalan capital.

"Reports indicate that a vehicle smashed against the caravan that assists and protects President Arzu," added the deputy government minister, who is leading the investigations.

The official explained that the incident is confusing, and he added that there are several versions, one of which states that the alleged attacker tried to run over the horse that the Guatemalan president was riding in his vehicle.

Arzu was horseback riding along the Tanque Alley in Antigua Guatemala, when his alleged attacker, who was identified as Pedro Haroldo Sac Sompil, smashed his vehicle against the presidential security caravan.

A source from the volunteer firefighters of Antigua Guatemala told NOTIMEX that Sac Sompil died from three gunshots in the pickup truck he was driving.

The deputy minister said that the authorities had arrested officer Jose Obdulio Villanueva, who reportedly defended the president and gunned down the attacker.

"The incident is being investigated, but we do not yet have reliable information," Cifuentes reaffirmed. He summoned an urgent news conference for the evening of 4 February.

Local radio stations reported that security forces are denying information to the media and ordered the police and firefighters to say nothing about this attack.

The incident occurred hours before the start of a two-day visit by Pope John Paul II on 5 February as part of a tour that will also include stops in Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Venezuela.

#### **Guatemalan Minister Gives News Conference on Arzu Attack**

*PA0502044696 Guatemala City Cadena de Emisoras Unidas in Spanish 0338 GMT 5 Feb 96*

[News conference by Government Minister Rodolfo Mendoza with unidentified reporters at the Ramada Conquistador Hotel in Guatemala City on 4 February — recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Mendoza] Good evening, Messrs. journalists. I want to tell you what happened so you may know it in the most direct and complete way possible. Today, around noon, the president — who was accompanied by the first lady and a friend of the president, Ricardo Quinonez, and members of his security — went for a horseback ride in an Antigua Guatemala area, specifically the road that leads to San Juan El Obispo — I believe that is the name.

When they were riding down the road a vehicle appeared, coming in the opposite direction. Although there

was enough space — the road is wide enough to let the vehicle pass — Captain Byron Miguel Lima, who was riding with the president, signaled the vehicle's driver to slow down. The vehicle slowed down, but then it suddenly sped up, swerving directly toward the president and the first lady. When Captain Lima saw this he spurred his horse to intercept the vehicle and, obviously, he was hit by the vehicle. Both he and the horse went down — the captain lost consciousness and lay on the ground.

The vehicle's driver then tried to escape but was surrounded by vehicles of the president's security members. The vehicle collided head-on with one of these vehicles, and the driver immediately tried to back off, hitting one of the president's vehicles that was behind it. He collided with a pickup truck of the president's security staff. The driver again stepped on the gas pedal, hit a motorcycle driven by one of the president's security staff members, and then drove straight at the president — who had gotten off his horse to attend Captain Lima.

Captain Byron Rene Bohr, a member of the president's security staff, tried to stop the driver and managed to grab his neck — but the driver again stepped on the gas pedal and went directly toward the president, who was attending Captain Lima. At that moment the president's security staff fired at the vehicle's tires, hitting the front right tire, but the vehicle did not stop — thus making it necessary to fire at the driver, who was shot three times. We deplore that he died on the spot.

Obviously, the president and the first lady were immediately led away and taken to their home in Antigua Guatemala. Captain Lima was taken to a hospital in Antigua Guatemala, where he first underwent a medical checkup, and it was found he suffered four fractures in his right arm. A cast was immediately applied, and he was then transferred to the military hospital, where he is under observation, because he lost consciousness. It was considered necessary that he remain under observation today.

The body was removed by the judge this afternoon, and an autopsy was ordered, as well as all the tests to determine if the man was drugged or anything else — to rule out all the possibilities of this kind. Fortunately, there were no other mishaps to deplore. The president is unharmed, and so is the first lady. We are now conducting an investigation to determine if this person tried to perpetrate this assassination on his own, or if there is anything else behind this. Therefore, this is the story, gentlemen. I am prepared to answer any questions.

[Reporter] Mr. Minister, there are reports that a man was arrested.

[Mendoza] Yes. In fact, what happened is that Sergeant Jose Obdulio Villanueva Ahrens opened fire and hit the vehicle's driver. He came to the National Police's facilities in Antigua Guatemala so the public prosecutor could question him — she already questioned him — and so he could be turned over to the war auditor, so all the investigations may be carried out in the most honest way.

[Reporter] [Words indistinct]

[Mendoza] I have the name here, somewhere.

[Reporter] He was traveling alone in the vehicle?

[Mendoza] He was traveling alone in the pickup.

[Reporter] [Words indistinct]

[Mendoza] He is Mr. (Pedro Haroldo Sac Sompj), 24 years old. (Sac Sompj).

[Reporter] Guatemalan?

[Mendoza] Yes, he is Guatemalan of...

[Reporter, interrupting] [Words indistinct]

[Mendoza] [Words indistinct] apparently from [word indistinct] San Juan del Obispo.

[Reporter] Were there weapons in his vehicle?

[Mendoza] I cannot tell you until the judge orders an inspection. The vehicle and the corpse remained there. Thus, I cannot tell you.

[Reporter] [Words indistinct]

[Mendoza] I cannot tell you that either. The truth is that everything was left in place to not interfere with the judge's investigation.

[Reporter] [Words indistinct]

[Mendoza] I do not know.

[Reporter] What vehicle was he driving?

[Mendoza] A pickup.

[Reporter] Is this the first attack on the president?

[Mendoza] There has been no other before this one. That would be speculation.

[Reporter] [Words indistinct]

[Mendoza] We hope that this is only an isolated incident. Of course, given that the president's security is involved and his holiness' visit is so close, we do not rule out any [word indistinct].

[Reporter] [Words indistinct]

[Mendoza] Of course.

[Reporter] Has the family of the [word indistinct] been questioned?

[Mendoza] Not personally. The police... [pauses] The deputy security minister has been involved in the preliminary investigations that will, of course, include meetings with the family of the dead man in an attempt to determine what could have prompted this senseless attack.

[Reporter] Could there be a political (?motive)?

[Mendoza] For the time being, we have found none.

[Reporter] [Words indistinct]

[Mendoza] At about 1300, I think.

[Reporter] [Words indistinct]

[Mendoza] I think that the president was accompanied by six members of his security corp.

[Reporter] What was the exact address of the attack?

[Mendoza] It occurred on the road from Antigua to San Juan del Obispo. The exact kilometer is not marked, but it must have been about 2 or 1 km outside of Antigua Guatemala.

[Reporter] [Words indistinct]

[Mendoza] Yes, the president is at his residence.

[Reporter] [Words indistinct]

[Mendoza] Basically the first lady and the husband of a niece of the president.

[Reporter] Is the program of his holiness unchanged?

[Mendoza] Completely intact. His holiness' security is very well-planned. We have a large group of policemen involved, some 4,000 will be in charge of his holiness here in the capital, plus 2,000 in Esquipulas. Thus, we trust that everything is under control.

[Reporter] [Words indistinct]

[Mendoza] We have no information that could confirm such a thing.

[Reporter] [Words indistinct]

[Mendoza] Of course.

[Reporter] Has the president considered moving [words indistinct]?

[Mendoza] No, the president has no plans to move to the presidential residence, because he clearly stated that he wishes to remain in his [word indistinct].

[Reporter] [Words indistinct]

[Mendoza] I understand that, yes, because that is what he has stated. He has said nothing to the contrary [chuckles], so we will have to ask him tomorrow.

[Reporter] [Words indistinct]

[Mendoza] It is difficult to establish that without an autopsy. An autopsy was ordered. Blood tests were also ordered to rule this out. It called our attention to the fact that he insisted on crashing and crashing again. He is either a person with some sort of training to drive a vehicle in that manner or a drugged person, because he was very insistent. We tried to stop him in many ways, with vehicles and some people grabbed him, but it was impossible. His vehicle's tires were punctured but not even then did the vehicle was stopped.

[Reporter] [Words indistinct]

[Mendoza] Nothing suspicious was found right away.

[Reporter] Has it been ruled out that the guerrillas could be involved?

[Mendoza] Nothing can be ruled for the time being until more information is available, and an investigation is carried. [chuckles] We cannot rule anything out given that the president's safety is involved.

[Reporter] [Words indistinct]

[Mendoza] We think that it was an attack, because first, he would have not charged at a group of persons on horseback. There was no need to do so. Second, if the case had been that the vehicle was [word indistinct] and that is why he tried to charge, then all the attempts to stop him would have sufficed. He crashed against the vehicles. The vehicles are there. Some journalists have already seen the vehicles, and they are in pretty bad shape from the various impacts.

#### **Guatemalan President's Schedule for Papal Visit Unchanged**

PA0502051596 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish  
0446 GMT 5 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Guatemala City, 4 Feb (NOTIMEX) — The presidential activities scheduled during the visit of Pope John Paul II that will start on 5 February will remain unchanged despite the attempt on President Alvaro Arzu's life, it was reported here on 4 February.

Government Minister Rodolfo Mendoza said that "President Arzu's schedule during the pope's visit will not be changed, but security will be intensified." [passage omitted]

Mendoza said that security will be reinforced, "because we cannot rule out another attempt." [passage omitted]

#### **Guatemala's URNG Decrees 6-Day Cease-Fire**

PA0202202196 Madrid EFE in Spanish  
1932 GMT 2 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Mexico City, 2 Feb (EFE) — The leaders of the Guatemalan guerrillas announced today their decision to suspend "offensive operations" during the six days [as received] Pope John Paul II remains in Guatemala.

The Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity (URNG) announced in Mexico City, where it has an office, that the General Command "decrees a cease-fire" from 5 to 10 February as a "signal of respect."

According to the communique, the presence and message of Pope John Paul II "will create opening for the lofty cause of justice and peace," which is why his visit is "an expression of solidarity" with the people that "strengthens the peace process."

#### **Guatemalan Ombudsman Sees Human Rights as 'Worrisome'**

PA0402151496 Guatemala City Teleonce Television  
in Spanish 0100 GMT 31 Jan 96

[From the "Telepress Newscast"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Human Rights Ombudsman Jorge Mario Garcia Laguardia today presented before the Congress plenum his annual report for 1995. He describes the human rights situation in Guatemala as worrisome in the document released today in the parliamentary plenum.

[Begin Garcia recording] The result of our files and investigations of cases reported is that we share the concern of other national and international institutions because we have found serious indications, which need to be investigated in depth, of a connection between criminal activity and people in power at certain levels.

It must be stressed that, unfortunately, it is not just the state that is responsible for the transgressions. The country continues to suffer from the violence by armed groups that question the system, added to the ever-increasing and uncontrolled violence by common criminals that seems to find no opposition.

A dramatic out-of-phase situation continues to exist between the formal Constitution and what really takes place. The excellent composition of our constitutional text does not match the worrisome reality.

Our year's statistics should cause authentic worry and I must stress that I do not present them with satisfaction, but with affliction.

The number of reports in 1994 reached 14,156, this year. But in 1995, according to the report, 17,204 cases were attended. It should be stressed, however, that not all the reports come under our jurisdiction. Citizens, when having to face the slow and inefficient work of the various departments of the administration, come to us helplessly and desperately seek our protection. We respond with various actions and always attend the inhabitants.

Of the cases we attended, 7 percent were preventive actions, 7.4 percent were mediating actions of different sorts of conflicts, 78 percent were guidance actions by giving advice and accompanying complainants to the appropriate authorities, and 2 percent were diverse residual actions.

Out of a total of 1,650 cases on record and guided through the legal system, 947 cases — in other words 57.4 percent of the total — referred to individual rights. It is not comforting that we need to reiterate what was stated in previous report, but the situation still prevails with very slight improvement. There is a lack of respect to life and to people's security and safety. The efforts made in the year by some institutions and some officials, which we do not doubt are in good faith, especially the Government Ministry and the National Police director, were not enough or efficacious to significantly modify the situation.

As we have many times said, we are better off than what we were in 1982, when the transition to democracy began, but the headway is very slow. Some figures illustrate this crudely: 223 cases of illegal executions, 215 abuse of authority, 177 threats, 82 kidnappings, 46 illegal arrests, 32 to with rights to personal safety, 45 [protection] petition requests, 10 freedom of thought expression, 10 on the right to private property, and seven on right to mail inviolability — documents, books, and communications secrecy. Something unbelievable on the eve of the 21st century: nine cases of torture.

Violations do not only encompass this area, whose origins are to be found in the authoritarian practices of security forces and police and in the consequences of the armed conflict. Other types of violations take place to the rights established in the Constitution, which refer to the social, political, and socio-economic rights. [end recording]

**'Experts': Guatemalans Could Lose U.S. Work Permits**

PA0302120896 Guatemala City PRENSA LIBRE  
in Spanish 1 Feb 96 p 107

[FBIS Translated Text] Experts on immigration law believe more than 100,000 Guatemalans could lose their

work permits and U.S. resident status if Guatemalan officials allow the Immigration and Naturalization Service [INS] to interpret the renewal of peace talks between the Alvaro Arzu administration and rebels as a definite agreement.

Attorney Eduardo Arevalo has said the Guatemalan Government should be very tactful when renewing the peace talks and ensure that the U.S. Government knows how to distinguish between mere talks and a signed peace agreement.

Arevalo added that a possibility exists that the INS could presuppose that the renewal of talks means the signing of an agreement, and it could decide to change the status of the Guatemalans living as refugees in the United States and who possess U.S. work permits.

The attorney has said Arzu should pay close attention to the situation of approximately 300,000 Salvadorans who faced a deadline yesterday to become acquainted with a new procedure and to avoid deportation. The situation might have been avoided had the Salvadoran Government been more prudent when it negotiated its peace agreement.

Arevalo has said Arzu faces a real challenge with the Guatemalans residing in the United States, who expect to be included in the round of negotiations with the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity, URNG, and have their interests protected.

Approximately 500,000 Guatemalans live in Los Angeles, California, many of whom remain in the United States protected by a status of political asylum as a result of the Guatemalan internal armed struggle that began 32 years ago.

## Honduras

### Honduras Expects U.S. Drug Fight Certification

PA0402154696 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish  
2250 GMT 29 Jan 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Tegucigalpa, 28 Jan (NOTIMEX) — A legislative source has said that Honduras is confident the United States will certify its fight against drugs, which the government of this Central American nation carried out in 1995. The source also listed the blows dealt on the drug traffickers.

The president of the Narcotics Commission of the Honduran Congress, Carlos Sosa Coello, said that a U.S. certification will serve to emphasize Honduras' efforts in the fight against drugs.

Sosa Coello, from the minority Innovation and Unity Party (PINU), said that more than seeking a U.S.

certification, Honduras is fighting drugs because it is in its own best interest because it has been detected that the national territory has been turned into a drugs warehouse.

"We strongly fight drug trafficking because we know of the damage it causes. Honduras will not be another Colombia," the legislator said.

Starting in 1988, "Honduras has played a leading role in the Central American region in the fight against drugs," Sosa Coello said after pointing out that it is in the country's own interest to eradicate this scourge so that domestic drug consumption does not increase.

The president of the Narcotics Commission said that studies show that 2 percent of the population has consumed hard drugs, such as cocaine, therefore the authorities in charge of the fight against drugs are exerting themselves to reduce that figure.

"Instead of consumption, we have deposits in Honduras, from where the drug is later shipped to more important markets," he added.

In 1995, police authorities confiscated more than 300 kg of cocaine, a figure much higher than the amount confiscated in earlier years. In addition, large marijuana plantations were destroyed, especially in the mountains in the northern and central part of the country.

#### **Honduran Minister on 'Failed' Talks With Nicaragua**

*PA0502024396 San Pedro Sula TIEMPO in Spanish 2 Feb 96 p 11*

[Report by Francisco Rodriguez]

[FBIS Translated Text] Tegucigalpa — The negotiations between the Honduran and Nicaraguan commissions to define a fishing zone of tolerance failed this Wednesday because the countries had "conflicting positions," Honduran Foreign Minister Delmer Urbizo Panting reported yesterday.

Honduras' proposal is to establish a common fishing zone, using parallel 14,59.8, three miles to the south and the same extension to the north, as the center point. However, Nicaragua rejects this position and wants the common fishing zone to be located between parallels 15 and 17.

The foreign minister said that the Binational Commission meetings ended because they were unable to reconcile their positions, but that the talks will continue with Nicaraguan Foreign Minister Ernesto Leal in upcoming days.

However, Urbizo Panting said Honduras will insist on its proposal to turn the disputed maritime sector into a common fishing zone. He also said they had accepted having Honduran fishermen appear before Nicaraguan fishing authorities in exchange for the offer that the \$50,000-fine for each ship would be pardoned.

The Honduran Government does not accept the fines that Nicaraguan authorities are trying to impose on Honduran fishermen, and the maritime conflicts with this country will only be discussed at the highest level, Delmer Urbizo Panting asserted.

"We are not accepting any kind of fines on the ships, because we believe they were working in Honduran waters," Urbizo Panting reiterated.

On another issue, the foreign minister announced that the mass firing of employees in his institution is due to personnel reduction requirements and changes the Foreign Ministry wants to implement.

It was confirmed that among those fired are senior official Herminio Pineda and personnel chief Reina Leda Padilla.

### **Nicaragua**

#### **Nicaraguan Minister on Papal Visit, OAS Mission**

*PA0402180596 Managua Canal Dos Television in Spanish 1600 GMT 28 Jan 96*

[Interview with Foreign Minister Ernesto Leal Sanchez by Elisa Maturana at the Canal Dos studio in Managua on the "This Week" program — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Maturana] As we had announced, here with us in our studio is Foreign Minister Ernesto Leal to talk about several topics. Welcome, Mr. Foreign Minister. Pope John Paul II is due to arrive in 10 days. People say there is zealotry with respect to the Pope's security during his visit. Did the Vatican demand any special guarantees for the Pope's visit? What is Nicaragua's answer?

[Leal] No, the Vatican did not make any specific demand concerning the Pope's visit to Nicaragua. We have been trying to organize and guarantee the flawless security of His Holiness along the entire route and the El Malecon Plaza. All the measures are already in place, however, and we have now started to ease tensions on the Pope's safety. We will open the southern road that was going to remain closed, except when the Pope is at the Nunciature, and we will be implementing a few other measures and hope not to inconvenience the Nicaraguan people.

[Maturana] Some people have described the papal visit as the government's act of atonement with the Pope. Does the government view it this way?

[Leal] I would not call it the government's act of atonement. Mrs. Violeta has been meeting with the Pope since 1980, and during each visit, she has told him of her intention, and that of the Nicaraguan people, to make atonement for the Pope's unfortunate 1983 visit. The idea is for this papal visit to be flawless, because the Nicaraguan people want to express their great satisfaction and happiness for the 7 February visit by His Holiness.

[Maturana] Does the visit carry any political connotations as some people have warned?

[Leal] I do not think the Nicaraguans should mix politics into this. We have the tendency to turn anything that happens in our country into a political issue, which is good at times and bad, or wrong, at others. I think we should view the Pope's visit in its proper context, for its pastoral significance to all Catholic parishioners and Christians, for he is the head of the Catholic Church on earth. We can also see it as a visit by the Vatican's chief of state, and anyone can express his views, because freedom of speech in Nicaragua allows it. So we should keep politics out of the Pope's visit to our country.

[Maturana] There is another much-discussed topic in the air, particularly after what happened to the Liberal Constitutionalist Party's caravan in the north, and that is the duration of the CIAV-OAS [International Support and Verification Commission-OAS] mission in Nicaragua, which is due to expire in June. What is the likelihood of extending its mandate?

[Leal] This is an important matter, Elisa. We are giving careful and serious thought to the likelihood of extending that mandate. We must, however, consider something else, and that is the upcoming elections. The political campaign is drawing closer; just a few months remain before 20 October. We should have the ability to develop our own institutions to protect the human rights of all citizens. The CIAV-OAS, at first, came to guarantee that the human rights of the former Resistance members would be observed. At the Nicaraguan government's request, the mandate was extended and expanded to include everybody, who was involved in the Nicaraguan war during the eighties. In other words, it included the former mobilized members of the Resistance, army, and police. We believe the CIAV-OAS has so far played a good role. We should assess whether its extension is necessary, because the first observers of the elections will begin arriving in June or late May. We want to avoid having the presence

of international organizations, carrying on different missions, in Nicaragua.

[Maturana] But there are clear indications that the U.S. government has argued in favor of prolonging the CIAV-OAS. Are there any conflicts on the matter between the Nicaraguan and U.S. governments?

[Leal] I would not call them conflicts. Several past administrations have insisted on the importance of having the CIAV-OAS continue its mission in Nicaragua. We must assess that and avoid making a rash decision. We want to decide if its presence beyond June is really justified. The opinions within the administration differ. Some officials feel it is necessary, while others feel the opposite. But it is a matter of assessing, in addition, what will become of the Human Rights Criminal Prosecuting Office. It is our duty to create our own institutions that will ensure the human rights of our citizens are observed. We must, therefore, create and strengthen the Human Rights Criminal Prosecuting Office in our country.

[Maturana] Talking about the elections and safety in certain zones of the country, above all in the central zone, the civilian groups you mention could serve as observers, or support the electoral process, if the CIAV-OAS is not here. Will they really control the zone? Would not it become dangerous if they cannot enter, or must enter, certain zones of the country during the elections?

[Leal] The CIAV-OAS does not have a coercive authority. In other words, the CIAV-OAS does not guarantee the Nicaraguan people access to one zone or another. The CIAV-OAS guarantees respect for their human rights. I think the Police and Army should guarantee the Nicaraguan people's access to these regions in the rural areas. That is why I said, regarding the human rights issue, the Nicaraguan people must create our own institutions to guarantee respect for those human rights.

[Maturana] There was another extremely controversial issue this week, meaning the border dispute with Honduras. The proposal for a buffer and joint fishing zone could be a definite solution. Has it been defined?

[Leal] It is not a definite solution. It could be a provisional solution while Honduras and Nicaragua proceed to negotiate the Caribbean Ocean areas' delimitation. We think this is a provisional situation but it can prevent military conflicts, clashes between the Honduran and Nicaraguan naval forces, the possible loss of human lives, and clashes that would only lead us to cause tension between the two countries. We insist that the fishing zone, buffer zone, or neutral zone in which the two countries may fish should be a zone that has yet to

be delimited by the two countries. Nevertheless, Elisa, this is a lengthy process. This is a process that Nicaragua has not carried out in the past, and we have now started it with Jamaica, and we are starting it with Honduras, with whom we have conflicts in the zone whose limits have yet to be defined.

[Maturana] Is there a possibility that the maritime delimitation with Honduras will be carried out before President Chamorro's term concludes?

[Leal] That is our goal and President Chamorro insists on the issue every time she sees President Reina. Technicians have already met — they met in Nicaragua and the will continue the meeting on Wednesday 31 January in Tegucigalpa. We hope to conclude before Mrs. Violeta's term ends.

[Maturana] There is an issue that seems to have been filed away — the Nicaraguan dispute with Colombia. What happened? Has Nicaragua given up taking the case to The Hague?

[Leal] No, we have never given up taking the case to The Hague. What we have said is that we must exhaust the option of a dialogue as a solution to conflicts. Then we would review the possibility of an international arbitration or resort to a trial at The Hague. We believe Colombia is duty bound to talk with us. As you know, certain internal problems have arisen in that country and this has prevented a continuation of the negotiations. Nevertheless, if negotiations with Colombia fail, we will take the case to The Hague so it could be solved once and for all.

[Maturana] We now want to ask a question to Ernesto Leal. It is reported that you support Pablo Antonio Cuadra's candidacy.

[Leal] That is right. I comprise....[pauses] I was invited to comprise the group that sponsors Pablo Antonio Cuadra's candidacy. I believe that Nicaragua — the way things are right now, meaning so polarized — needs a candidate, or a movement, or an alliance, or a group that truly sponsors a national solution.

[Maturana] Is this openly supported?

[Leal] Many people are involved in this and we find increasing sympathy with the topic. I want to clarify this because it is important to know that Pablo Antonio Cuadra has yet to say aye or nay until now. We will have to wait and see what his decision will be, but we believe there should be a national solution in Nicaragua in the 1996 elections.

[Maturana] Thank you, foreign minister.

## Panama

### Canal Board Head: Panama Must Respect 1979 Treaty

PA0302035496 Panama City EL UNIVERSAL DE PANAMA in Spanish 29 Jan 96 p A1

[Report by Victor Torres]

[FBIS Translated Text] Panama must respect the 1979 Neutrality Treaty various countries of this hemisphere signed so the Panama Canal continues to function successfully after the United States turns it over to Panamanian hands on 31 December 1999, said Joe Reeder, president of the Panama Canal Commission Board of Directors.

Reeder has said "this will guarantee the neutrality of the Panama Canal."

According to Reeder, the Neutrality Treaty is, in addition to NAFTA, the most prominent and complete document signed by the United States and Panama.

Reeder has said that in addition to Panama's compliance with the Neutrality Treaty, the United States has a vital concern in the continued success of the Panama Canal, because 67 percent of all the shipments that go through the Panama Canal are destined for the United States.

According to Reeder, as long as the Panama Canal continues to be a successful enterprise, it will continue to contribute to the increase in trade and prosperity among all the peoples in this hemisphere.

Reeder has said "it is important, then, for us to honor the letter and spirit of the Neutrality Treaty to help Panama become a prosperous country and for its wellbeing."

Reeder has said the United States' main concern is that Panama respects the contents of the Neutrality Treaty, adding that the U.S. Government will take every necessary step to make this possible.

Meanwhile, Ricardo Arias, Panamanian ambassador to the United States, has said the United States, the largest user of the waterway, operates the Panama Canal; this explains why the United States is so concerned about the Panama Canal's future after the year 2000.

Arias has said the user-operator relationship with the United States will end when the Panama Canal is turned over to Panamanian hands; therefore, Panama will have to be more aware of other countries that use the Panama Canal.

Arias has said there should be constant communication with the United States and other countries of this hemisphere that are users of this waterway when Panama takes over the administration of the Panama Canal.

The Panama Canal Board of Directors ended its quarterly meeting in which various topics were discussed, including an increase of Panamanian personnel in the Panama Canal Commission.

**Panama's Envoy to Cuba Recalled on  
'Irregularities'**

PA0202165896 Panama City LA PRENSA in Spanish  
1 Feb 96 p 1

[Report by Vilma E. Figueroa B.]

[FBIS Translated Text] Cesar Moreno Saavedra, ambassador to Cuba was recalled due to administrative irregularities at the Panamanian Embassy, according to a government source who requested to remain anonymous.

The source did not reveal what type of administrative irregularities were reported at the Panamanian Embassy in Cuba. However, he said that Rodrigo Gonzalez and Alberto Pons were possible candidates to replace Moreno Saavedra.

Meanwhile, the Foreign Ministry declined making any statements on the case, but when questioned repeatedly, did not confirm or deny the report.

"We have no knowledge regarding this case, in due time we will make an official statement, but for the time being we have no information," said an official from the communications department of the Foreign Ministry, via telephone.

Upon learning about this case, we tried contacting, via phone, Foreign Minister Gabriel Lewis Galindo to receive an official statement, but he was not available.

The source added that Moreno Saavedra is a PRD [Democratic Revolutionary Party] leader from Los Santos Province and well thought of in the party ranks.

According to other sources, Moreno Saavedra headed one of the Dignity Battalions, which were created during the military regime of Manuel Antonio Noriega to support political actions of the government in power. He was also director of the General Directorate for Community Development, according to the report.

### Argentina

#### Argentina's Di Tella: Relationship With U.S. 'Tender'

PY0302020696 Buenos Aires CLARIN in Spanish  
2 Feb 96 p 4

["Special" article for CLARIN by unidentified correspondent]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Upon opening a seminar on "Argentina's Future: Menem's Second Administration," sponsored by the University of London Latin American Studies Institute, Foreign Minister Guido Di Tella today made astounding remarks on various points of the foreign policy that has been implemented during his tenure.

Addressing the participants on various issues, the foreign minister described as "tender" the relationship with the United States. Many Argentines who were present remembered that Di Tella had previously described this relationship as "carnal."

#### A Matter of Statistics

Di Tella reported that, when he assumed the post of foreign minister, he discovered that, "like Cuba, Argentina voted in the United Nations in the same manner as the United States barely 17 percent of the time, while European countries voted in the same manner as the United States 70 percent of the time."

Di Tella noted: "I called the officials from my ministry and told them that, henceforth, we should agree with the United States 70 percent of the time, as that is what the Western hemisphere is about."

In Di Tella's opinion, with the previous voting trend, "the United States was being angered without any grounds, and it is a country that can do a lot of damage with little effort."

During his lecture, the foreign minister did not explain whether issues were being considered separately, or whether statistics were kept merely to guarantee the required percentage of votes in agreement with U.S. votes and positions. [passage omitted]

#### U.S. Firm in Argentina Said Unaware of Contract

PY0302022696 Buenos Aires CLARIN in Spanish  
2 Feb 96 p 16

[FBIS Translated Text] IBM Argentina has admitted that it has not reported to its central office about having contracted the firm CCR [expansion unknown] to participate in the informatization of the Bank of the Nation. News about that became known when the FBI and the Securities and Exchange Commission (which

controls the companies that sell shares on Wall Street) began investigating the alleged payment of bribes within the framework of the "Centenario Program."

Mariano Botas, IBM Argentina news manager, said: "Investigations conducted internally at IBM indicate that none of the company executives abroad has been informed of the details of the contract signed with CCR." For the Argentine branch of IBM, the information was not reported due to "a managerial decision."

IBM Argentina President Ricardo Martorana and Financial Vice President Javier Orcoven resigned in September, when the conflict concerning the IBM-Bank of the Nation contract flared. Operations Vice President Gustavo Soriani was dismissed on the same occasion.

When Uruguayan Wilmer Weicamburu, the new IBM Argentina president, was installed in October, he admitted that the contract signed with CCR had been "a serious managerial mistake." He held Soriani, who was in charge of preparing the company's contracts, responsible for the decision. He added, however, that "undoubtedly, the presidency and the financial vice presidency have also failed."

According to leaks, if the Argentine branch had reported to IBM headquarters about the CCR subleasing, the operation would probably not have been authorized in the United States. IBM often subleases work, but in the Bank of the Nation's case, something unusual occurred: An alternative system, the so-called muleto, was paid for. This system is used when there are inconveniences with the central system. The situation was also unusual because the work was paid for before the informatization work had been finished.

IBM Argentina promised to pay \$37 million to CCR for the muleto system work, which was not contemplated in the contract and has never been put into operation. IBM paid CCR \$16 million; the company then said it had used \$14 million of this total to pay suppliers that did not exist.

IBM headquarters would have signed a contract with an insurance company in order to cover contingencies and, as a result, 10 percent of the contract would have been paid for.

Although IBM Argentina admitted having failed to use some habitual control mechanisms, this is the first time it has acknowledged that the CCR subleasing had not been reported to the United States (and consequently not authorized).

These details were revealed this week, when a delegation of seven U.S. officials of the FBI and the Depart-

ment of Justice arrived in the country. They met Judge Adolfo Bagnasco, who is in charge of the investigations.

The U.S. officials are investigating whether IBM headquarters had any responsibility for the CCR subleasing and for the payment of bribes, as is being said.

**Argentina's Menem Says Ties With Chile  
'Exceptional'**

PY0202195096 Madrid EFE in Spanish  
1447 GMT 1 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Buenos Aires, 2 Feb (EFE) — Argentine President Carlos Menem today categorically rejected any link between the pending border conflict with Chile and the lawsuit reactivated in Buenos Aires over the murder of former Chilean Army Chief General Carlos Prats.

Menem said his respect for Augusto Pinochet, former Chilean president and current Army chief, "has not changed" and pointed out that relations between the two countries are "exceptional."

"Anyone giving the issue a different interpretation would be completely wrong," said the Argentine president during an exclusive interview with EFE.

"Point out in the interview that some people's capability of inventing things is laughable, it has no limits," he added.

Menem also expressed confidence that Chilean and Argentine congressmen will ratify the agreement signed in 1991 by the governments of the two countries to solve the final pending border problem in the Continental Glaciers area.

Some Chilean politicians believe the investigation into the murder of Gen. Prats — which took place 22 years ago in Buenos Aires — was reactivated following Chile's decision to build a military air base near the area in dispute.

"Chile can do whatever it pleases in its territory and we cannot feel displeased because it built a landing strip near the area in dispute. This cannot motivate reprisals by Argentina," Menem said.

He said bilateral relations "have strengthened since the validity of democracy in Chile and we have solved problems that in the past seemed to be unsurmountable." [passage omitted]

Menem said his announcement on the arrest of Arancibia Clavel "has nothing to do with the Chilean Government, its institutions, or with the respect I have for the Chilean Armed Forces."

The president recalled: "I was one of the Latin American presidents who went to Chile and was received by General Pinochet during the presidential inauguration of Patricio Aylwin," when democracy was reestablished in 1989.

"My respect for former President Pinochet has not changed. We have very good relations with Chile. Our two Armed Forces are in permanent contact and maintain excellent relations," he said.

The Argentine president said that in 1991 the two countries had 24 pending border conflicts "and we have now settled 23 of them."

"It is not that the solution to the Continental Glaciers is taking too long, it is that the Congresses of the two countries are taking their time, which is logical," he said.

The congressmen are studying a solution that consists of dividing in equal parts the 2,500 square kilometers extension of the area in dispute, on the Andes Mountain Range, in the south.

Menem said Argentine and Chilean legislators "are measuring the reaction of the people they represent in face of the importance of the decision they must make."

**Argentinian Air Force Head on Monitoring Air  
Traffic**

PY0202130496 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish  
1950 GMT 1 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Buenos Aires, 1 Feb (TELAM) — Brigadier General Juan Paulik, Air Force commander in chief, has informed the cabinet about the radar plan to cover Argentine territory with technological equipment, which will effectively guarantee air traffic.

"The overall radar plan costs about 30 million pesos," Paulik said after the cabinet meeting, which was held today at the Olivos residence with President Carlos Menem.

The Air Force chief stated that "Brazil plans to invest \$1.43 billion just to control the Amazon area."

He reported with the budget that he has submitted practically 70 percent of Argentine territory will be under control," and he stressed that it is not an "exaggerated" budget.

He also said that "some 180 million pesos will be invested in the first stage" and they will be used "to control the northern border and air traffic in the central area of the country."

"We are leaving the radars for La Pampa and the Patagonia for the second stage because that area is not a priority for today's air traffic," Paulik said.

### Bolivia

#### **Bolivia's MIR on Use of 'Anti-Imperialist Discourse'**

PY0302000496 Cochabamba LOS TIEMPOS  
in Spanish 20 Jan 96 p A3

[FBIS Translated Text] La Paz, 19 Jan (ANF) — The Movement of the Revolutionary Left [MIR] — on which the United States is keeping a close eye — has not ruled out the possibility of once again resorting to "anti-imperialist" discourse in the run-up to the 1997 elections by fielding [former president] Jaime Paz Zamora — whose U.S. visa was canceled — for the presidency.

[MIR] deputies consulted by ANF said confidentially that the resumption of an anti-American stance "is an element that must be taken into consideration." They nonetheless opted for officially voicing no opinion because relations with Washington "constitute a delicate subject."

Those deputies pointed out that no concrete decision has been made thus far on how MIR party members will address themselves regarding the issue of relations with the United States following the decision of the U.S. Consulate in La Paz to cancel Paz Zamora's entry visa.

The MIR deputies said that for the time being, their priority was to forcefully lobby for the MIR, explaining its position on the Paz Zamora case.

They acknowledged that there are MIR factions in favor of negotiating with the United States, since they want to avoid a head-on collision with this powerful nation lest U.S. officials should be provoked into hardening their position on the MIR.

The MIR congressmen were of the opinion that former U.S. Ambassador to Bolivia Robert Gelbart is the toughest guy in the Clinton administration.

Another MIR faction defends the resumption of an anti-imperialist diatribe against the United States, which, it is claimed, will be more beneficial from a political and electoral point of view than negotiations with the world power to the north.

The lawmakers believe that Paz Zamora may capitalize on the strong anti-American feeling prevalent among the Bolivian people to win more votes in the 1997 elections and in parliamentary elections, which will tremendously increase his chances of acceding to the presidency.

This dilemma is being analyzed by the MIR executive committee, which is currently meeting in the city of La Paz; its conclusions will be made known on 20 January.

#### **Bolivia's MIR Seeks Change in U.S. Stand on Visa**

PY0202214296 La Paz LA RAZON in Spanish  
27 Jan 96 p A3

[FBIS Translated Text] Leopoldo Lopez, a MIR [Movement of the Revolutionary Left] senator, confirmed on 26 January that his party is taking steps in the United States to try and get the U.S. Government to revoke its decision to withdraw former President Jaime Paz Zamora's visa.

"We are not going to stand still," Lopez told LA RAZON before indicating that he will travel to the United States to hear the opinion of sectors of that country regarding the withdrawal of Paz Zamora's visa.

Carlos Saavedra, the MIR's coordinator, called this newspaper from the United States to stress that he is in that country to visit his children who are studying there. But, Lopez stated that Saavedra would presumably take advantage of his stay to make some inquiries because "we political men are always political men and we always act as such." Senator Guido Capra, a member of the MNR [Nationalist Revolutionary Movement], and Hugo Baptista, head of the UCS [Solidarity Civic Union] congressional bloc, termed as positive the steps that the MIR has taken to obtain Paz Zamora's visa.

In a kind of play on words, Hugo Carvajal, head of the MIR congressional bloc, indicated that although Paz Zamora has launched his candidacy for the presidency, he has not yet started his campaign.

Regarding the actions that Paz Zamora and his government carried out, which bothered the U.S. Administration, Carvajal mentioned that the drafting of the so-called "Repentance Decree" [for drug traffickers] must be added to the former president's "sins."

#### **Bolivian MIR Senator Approves CIA Presence in Nation**

PY0202210796 La Paz LA RAZON in Spanish  
26 Jan 96 p A8

[FBIS Translated Text] The MIR [Movement of the Revolutionary Left] approves of the CIA presence in Bolivia because it will displace the DEA from the drug enforcement program and, if it handles the issue intelligently, impede the militarization of the country.

These were the arguments raised by MIR Senator Leopoldo Lopez, who added that drug enforcement in the United States entails a struggle among intelligence agencies, in which the CIA has emerged victorious.

He said: "I am convinced that the CIA has been able to prove to the Clinton administration that the DEA is unable to effectively handle the drug enforcement program and that the DEA committed too many blunders that could result in instability in Latin America."

Lopez said that in order to avoid the militarization of the drug enforcement program, "it must be handled intelligently. The CIA will act intelligently, relegating the DEA to interdiction and repression operations."

He warned: "Despite the fact that the drug czar is now a military officer, the militarization of the drug enforcement program will be conditioned to the victories achieved by the CIA with the official participation of Mexico, Panama, Colombia, and Bolivia. If the CIA fails, harsh times are ahead, with the militarization of the program."

Despite his positive reaction to the CIA's presence in Bolivia, Lopez criticized President Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada for having "officially" accepted the CIA's presence in Bolivia, even though "unofficially" it has been in the country for a long time.

**Bolivian Party Leader on 'Two-Faced' CIA Actions**  
PY0202170796 La Paz LA RAZON in Spanish  
24 Jan 96 p A2

[FBIS Translated Text] Marcos Domic, top leader of the United Left (IU), has termed the public CIA declaration — that it will expand its actions in Bolivia within the struggle against drug trafficking — "two faced" because on several occasions it has been "accused of covering up for drug traffickers and governments that are involved in drug trafficking for political reasons."

The leftist leader stressed that this occurred in our country during the dictatorship of former General Luis Garcia Meza, when "the CIA had infiltrated agents and permitted the operation of that drug trafficking government because it was an anti-communist administration."

Domic stated that the government should not tolerate an expansion of CIA activities in Bolivia, and the public announcement was "an unusual display of sincerity."

He added that the CIA has been in Bolivia for a very long time and that it is characterized for its infiltration of the government, the labor sector, the military, and the diplomatic corps.

**Bolivian Minister Expects No Change in U.S. Drug Policy**

PY0202170696 La Paz LA RAZON in Spanish  
25 Jan 96 p A2

[FBIS Translated Text] Bolivian Foreign Minister Antonio Aranibar believes the appointment of General Barry McCaffrey as the new drug 'czar' will not bring about any change in the U.S. drug enforcement policy.

Aranibar said: "I do not believe the U.S. drug enforcement policy is linked to people, but rather to circumstances. Thus, I believe the appointment will not result in significant changes, but perhaps in just giving continuity to the ongoing policy."

He made it clear that his remarks about McCaffrey's appointment do not entail interference in U.S. domestic policy.

**Bolivian Politicians Concerned Over Drug 'Czar' Choice**

PY0202170496 La Paz PRESENCIA in Spanish  
26 Jan 96 p 6

[FBIS Translated Text] ANF — Bolivian politicians voiced concern yesterday over the possible consequences in Bolivia of President Bill Clinton's decision to name a U.S. Army general as the new drug "czar."

Clinton proposed Barry McCaffrey, a Vietnam and Gulf War veteran who is commander of the South Command headquartered in Panama, to coordinate the U.S. drug enforcement operations, replacing former policeman Lee Brown.

Legislators Enrique Toro (ADN [Nationalist Democratic Action]), Guido Riveros (MIR [Movement of the Revolutionary Left]), and Benjamin Miguel (PDC [Christian Democratic Party]) admitted that the White House is clearly showing it will tighten drug enforcement. Even within the United States people protested over McCaffrey's appointment; among them the Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA), an organization that upholds human rights which believes the military approach of the anti-drug struggle has failed.

Toro said Clinton wants to show his determination in the anti-drugs struggle at a time when he seeks to be reelected. Riveros agreed on the need for Bolivia to draft a drug enforcement policy free of foreign impositions.

Miguel believes it is likely the U.S. stance in the drug struggle will tighten, adding that it all depends on the Bolivian Government.

**Bolivian Daily: U.S. Drug 'Czar' Efforts  
'Unsuccessful'**

PY0202190496 La Paz LA RAZON in Spanish  
26 Jan 96 p A5

[Editorial: "The Disquieting Collapse of Drug 'Czars'"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Judging from how little time they stay in office, U.S. drug "czars" do not appear to hold much power or to exert great influence. Nor does this bureaucratic position appear to be attractive to competent senior officials, who — in the case of Tom Brown, the last one to visit us — would rather lecture at universities than chase drug traffickers.

The worst thing to befall these misnamed "czars" is that their efforts are repeatedly proved to be unsuccessful. Would anyone with any self respect embark on a fruitless, repressive task linked to espionage and secret services; or on a task that is fomented by a hysterical group of people who claim to profess high moral values and who vainly believe a vice can be eradicated through violence?

As far as we know, no outgoing drug "czar" has submitted an encouraging report on the demanding duties they had to perform during their tenure. Instead, they all left the impression that they were leaving their office with an undisguised sense of frustration and failure.

The new "czar" is an army officer and a Vietnam veteran. His Vietnam experience is certainly a questionable asset, given the failure experienced by the United States there. What happened in Vietnam should perhaps serve as omen for Gen. McCaffrey, who is one of the many U.S. Government "experts."

Perhaps when the number of dismissed and retired drug "czars" are sufficient to form a legion — for which not many more would be needed — they could hold a convention to tell the world that it would be better to stop this insane war and decriminalize the use of prohibited drugs.

### Brazil

**Brazilian Article Views Efforts for Sivam Approval**

PY0302023896 Rio de Janeiro O GLOBO  
in Portuguese 2 Feb 96 p 3

[Article by Denise Rothenburg]

[FBIS Translated Text] Brasilia — The same week Senator Ramez Tebet (PMDB-MS) [Brazilian Democratic Movement Party-Mato Grosso do Sul] presents his report on the Amazon Region Surveillance System (Sivam), he will also be analyzing the draft of a resolu-

tion in which the executive branch requests authorization to endorse a foreign loan to be granted to the Mato Grosso do Sul Government. The loan totals \$20 million and will be used to pave 90 km of the MS-141 highway. In addition, the state government coffers will contribute with \$10 million to the project. Behind the scenes, senators who still have reservations about the Sivam project believe that the loan to be granted to the Mato Grosso do Sul government, with the federal government's endorsement, is the price being paid for a favorable report about Sivam.

Documents about the loan to be granted for the paving of the highway arrived at the Senate on 21 December, with President Fernando Henrique Cardoso's endorsement, and were debated in record time, although the Central Bank had opposed it. The Central Bank's report stated that the maximum revenue allocation (15 percent) had already been surpassed.

Authorization for the loan that Tebet, who is also Sivam's rapporteur, had proposed was ultimately approved on 24 January by the Economic Affairs Committee. The authorization was supported by the government leader in the Senate, Senator Elcio Alvares (PFL-ES) [Liberal Front Party-Espirito Santo]. There has been an emergency request for a swift analysis of the issue in the Senate's plenary session next week. Asked about the project on 1 February, Tebet said that the Mato Grosso do Sul community has been dreaming for years about the possibility of having the highway paved and that the ceiling established for the compromising of the state's revenues can be surpassed in special situations.

"The operation is legal. Why is there so much interest about the project?" Tebet asked. He denies the existence of links between this loan and the report he is preparing about the Sivam.

"This is ridiculous. I will present my report about the Sivam next week and it has no relation whatsoever with the highway," he asserted.

Tebet became irritated when he read in the papers that the Aeronautics Ministry had prepared a document contesting the evaluation the Brazilian Society for Scientific Development [SBPC] had made about the Sivam. According to the SBPC, the Sivam could be implemented for 930 million reais [R], instead of R1.4 billion, as foreseen in the government's project. In order to calm the senators' down, the government-supporting parties are organizing a meeting between Tebet and President Cardoso.

The amendment Senator Osmar Dias (PSDB-PR) [Brazilian Social Democracy Party-Parana] presented on 1 February, calling for a tender bidding for the

Sivam, was strengthened by a letter the U.S. company Westinghouse, which lost the contract to supply equipment for the project to Raytheon, sent to the Senate, asserting that there have been irregularities in the choice of Raytheon.

**Brazil Sectors Lobby Against Patent Bill Pipeline**  
*PY0302021196 Sao Paulo GAZETA MERCANTIL*  
*in Portuguese 31 Jan 95 p A6*

[Article by Maria Helena Tachinardi in Brasilia]

[FBIS Translated Text] After being debated in the Senate for three years, the Patent Bill will probably be voted on between 12 and 15 February. The voting is preceded by an intense campaign being conducted by sectors that reject the pipeline [preceding word in English], such as the national pharmaceutical laboratories, some industrial federations, the Brazilian Association of Pharmaceutical Products [Associacao Brasileira de Quimica Fina — Abifina], and the Brazilian Society for Scientific Development.

Senator Ney Suassuna (PMDB-PB) [Brazilian Democratic Movement Party-Paraiba], who wrote the report excluding this mechanism from the bill, said: "These entities are sending to the senators material explaining that the pipeline harms the interests of the national industries." Suassuna's report has been approved by the Constitution and Justice Committee and will compete with the report by his rival — Senator Fernando Bezerra (PMDB-RN) [PMDB-Rio Grande do Norte], who is rapporteur of the Economic Affairs Committee [CAE] — for the support of 81 senators.

The pipeline mechanism recognizes patents of products developed in laboratories. This protection is in force for as long as the patent is valid in the country of origin. Bezerra's report, which is supported by the government and the foreign pharmaceutical laboratories, acknowledges the pipeline.

On 30 January, Senator Elcio Alvares (PFL-ES) [Liberal Front Party-Espirito Santo], who is the government leader in the Senate, said he is "absolutely certain" that the pipeline will be approved. The government has the majority of votes in the Senate and the bill will probably be approved because, when Bezerra's report was voted on in the CAE last week, the pipeline was approved by 18 votes in favor and seven against.

Bezerra insists that this type of patent recognition will not harm the national industry, which will be able to continue copying the medicines that are already being sold in the market.

Senate President Jose Sarney (PMDB-AP) [PMDB-Amapa] is against the pipeline and has even supported

Suassuna's proposal stating that support for this sort of patent should be reached through bilateral accords, particularly with the United States. As a result, he believes that Brazil can make a trade bargain. Itamaraty and the Science and Technology Ministry, however, have rejected the suggestion. Senator Alvares made it very clear that the government did not accept the proposal either.

The plenary session will have to solve another dispute: Whether Bezerra's and Suassuna's reports should be voted on before or after the Chamber of Deputies' draft bill. On 30 January, Senator Alvares acknowledged for the first time that the merit belongs to Suassuna's report and that, in accordance with congressional rules, it will have to be voted on first. The government, however, will request that the senators decide, through a vote, which report should be voted on first.

On 5 February, the Senate's plenary session "will read" the reports. After that, the senators will have three working days to analyze the documents.

Suassuna said that Carlos Eduardo Moreira Ferreira, president of the Sao Paulo State Federation of Industries, is against the pipeline. Ferreira will meet on 31 January, at the National Confederation of Industries, with Senator Bezerra, who is the entity's president.

**Brazil Industry Federation Backs Patent Bill Pipeline**

*PY0202195996 Sao Paulo GAZETA MERCANTIL*  
*in Portuguese 1 Feb 96 p A11*

[Report by Maria Helena Tachinardi]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Sao Paulo State Federation of Industries (FIESP) on 31 January announced its support for rapporteur Fernando Bezerra's (PMDB-RN) [Brazilian Democratic Movement Party-Rio Grande do Norte] report on the Patent Bill, including the controversial "pipeline" [preceding word in English] (recognition of patents for products that are being developed by laboratories, for the rest of the period of protection granted in the country in which the patent was issued).

Senator Ney Suassuna (PMDB-PB) [Paraiba], who wrote a report that rejects the "pipeline," said that FIESP President Carlos Eduardo Moreira Ferreira supports his position, yet on 31 January — during a meeting with Fernando Bezerra, president of the National Confederation of Industry (CNI), and with the presidents of the Minas Gerais, Rio Grande do Sul, and Tocantins federations — Ferreira denied that he supports Suassuna's report. This information was conveyed to GAZETA MERCANTIL by Senator Bezerra.

On 31 January, Ferreira wrote to the Brazilian Pharmaceutical Industries Association (Abifarma), explaining that FIESP/CIESP [Sao Paulo State Industries Center] will not sign a statement in favor of Suassuna's report, which will be published the day before the vote on the Patent Bill.

"While we are certainly concerned about the situation of the national pharmaceutical industry, we believe we should also be concerned about the possibility of Brazilian exports being affected by serious setbacks, with repercussions in other equally important industrial sectors," Ferreira wrote, reiterating Bezerra's concern over possible U.S. sanctions on Brazilian products if the "pipeline" is not approved.

Ferreira said Bezerra assured him that the form of "pipeline" proposed in his report will not provide for the retroactive payment of "royalties."

Bezerra said that of the 27 state industrial federations, those from Paraiba and Goias have openly stated their disagreement with the "pipeline." The reports by Bezerra and Suassuna and the alternate bill proposed by the Chamber of Deputies will be voted on at a plenum session between 12 and 15 February. The government, the foreign pharmaceutical laboratories, and part of the local industry support the opinion of Bezerra. National research institutions, the national pharmaceutical laboratories, and the Brazilian Society for Scientific Development (SBPC) support Suassuna.

#### **Brazil's Internal Debt Development, Problems Viewed**

PY0102220796 Sao Paulo GAZETA MERCANTIL  
in Portuguese 26 Jan 96 p A4

[Article by Ivanir Jose Bortot]

[FBIS Translated Text] During their next meeting, the Central Bank will submit to the National Monetary Council a monetary program for the first quarter of 1996 compatible with the fiscal effort to maintain a stable public debt.

"Our objective for 1996 is to maintain a stable level of debt in proportion to the GDP within the framework of the fiscal austerity policy, which is essential for price stability," said Francisco Lafaiete de Padua Lopes, Central Bank economic policy director.

He acknowledges the public debt worsened last year in relation to 1994, but he nonetheless maintains that the fiscal situation of the public sector is much better than in 1991 when the public debt reached 40 percent of the GDP. The balance of the debt accumulated up until November 1995 was 31 percent with a 2.5 percent increase.

"There is no explosion of our debt like some economists claim. There is room to increase the public debt, but we are thinking in terms of maintaining a stable coefficient. The idea is to make the GDP coefficient the main indicator of the government fiscal policy."

Francisco Lopes considers it essential to adopt a policy with the logo "only spend as much as you collect" so that the so-called "fiscal ballast" can render stability to the real.

There have been deep changes in the composition of the public debt. According to the Central Bank, the net public foreign debt in relation to the GDP dropped from 25 percent in 1991 to 5.8 percent [no date given]. "With the sale of the public companies, there has been a meaningful transference of the foreign debt to the private sector," Lopes said. The foreign debt was ultimately reduced thanks to the strength of the real in relation to the dollar.

The internal debt, on the contrary, jumped from 14.5 percent of the GDP in 1991 to 25.1 percent in 1995. "It mainly grew specifically due to the states and municipalities. The federal administration's debt remained essentially stable in the past five years," Lopes said. The Central Bank figures indicate that the net internal debt of the states and municipalities was 7.5 percent of the GDP in 1991. Nowadays it is 10.7 percent of the GDP.

Given the efforts the government has made with regard to fiscal policy, primarily during the administration of former President Fernando Collor de Mello, efforts that were deepened during the second year of Itamar Franco's administration, the federal administration managed to maintain its debts at a level between 13 and 13.2 percent of the GDP by last November. The net public debt ultimately amounted to 1 percent of the GDP between December 1994 and November 1995.

"It cannot be said that there is an explosion of the debt and that the arrival of foreign capital represents a setback for the real," the Central Bank director said. The fiscal situation of the states and municipalities, on the contrary, deteriorated in the past five years, because of the lack of commitment to reduce expenses and the impact of the real on the finances of state banks.

Most of the states like Sao Paulo (with the Banespa) [Sao Paulo State Bank], Rio de Janeiro (with the Banerj) [Rio de Janeiro State Bank], Mato Grosso (with the Bemat) [Mato Grosso State Bank], and Alagoas (with Produban), among others, faced difficulties to maintain their financial institutions in operation. In these cases, the debts with the banks became worse, which has stressed the imbalance in their accounts.

## Chile

**Chile Reactivates 'Poisoned Grapes' Case With U.S.**  
*PY0302022796 Santiago EL MERCURIO in Spanish*  
2 Feb 96 pp A1, A16

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The Chilean Government expressed yesterday to U.S. State Department officials in Washington its interest in finding a final solution to the poisoned grapes case. This is how the contacts at the diplomatic level were resumed to find a solution to this case which has been pending for almost seven years.

In order to officially resume the diplomatic talks, the Chilean Foreign Ministry sent to Washington a special mission headed by Juan Martabit, director of the Americas Department, who met yesterday with U.S. State Department officials.

By sending the delegation, the Chilean Government wants to make it clear to the U.S. Administration that the poisoned grapes case is not a closed issue for Chile, that this is an issue of national interest, and that this is why a satisfactory solution to this case must be found.

It has also been reported that the Chilean Foreign Ministry, through a note delivered by Chilean Ambassador John Biehl, expressed to U.S. officials its concern over the measures approved by the State of Florida restricting imports of vegetables and fruits into that market. According to Chile, this measure violates bilateral agreements and WTO regulations.

Ambassador Biehl and the diplomatic mission in Washington have also conveyed to U.S. Government and congressional representatives the Chilean concern over the bill being debated in the U.S. Congress, which is sponsored by Democratic Senator Bob Graham of the State of Florida. The bill is aimed at changing the definition of safeguards that a country can implement to protect its internal production when it is seriously affected by excessive imports.

Such a bill would reduce the import quota and, instead of being implemented at the national level, would allow each state to determine when local industry and production can be affected by imports of foreign products.

Private groups expressed yesterday their concern over the measures of the State of Florida and the bill, because they can represent more obstructions for Chilean exports to that market in violation of bilateral protocols and agreements and WTO regulations.

This issue will be discussed in Santiago by Chilean officials and Senator Graham, who will arrive in Chile on 3 February as part of a U.S. congressional delegation.

The other members of the delegation are Republican Senator for Ohio Mike Dewine and Democratic Senator for Nevada Richard H. Bryan. [passage omitted]

The Chilean Government's concern is that this trade issue could be linked, as most issues are nowadays in the United States, with the upcoming U.S. elections.

Florida is a very important state in terms of votes, and all candidates want to be on good terms with its inhabitants. Therefore, it is expected that, even if the measures are illegal, federal officials will delay their study and a resolution to prevent a negative incident in the elections.

It is believed that the additional control measures on vegetable and fruit imports will not be lifted until the end of the agricultural harvest in Florida.

Regarding the debate of the bill, it was reported that the House of Representatives goes into a two-week recess and that the speaker of the House has given instructions that the bill be debated at the committee level first and then in the House plenum.

Cristobal Valdes, president of the Exporters Association, criticized the bill approved by the U.S. Senate last week because it intends to restrict the import of foreign products when local production is affected.

Valdes noted that the current regulation in force throughout the United States, one that Chile is fulfilling, says that the safeguard is implemented when national production, not state production, could be affected.

He added: "This means multiplying by 50 the risk of U.S. protectionist measures."

He said this could eventually affect Chilean sales of grapes, apples, or other fruits if a state believes they are affecting local production.

Valdes reported that his association and the Federation of Agroindustrial Producers sent a note to the U.S. Senate saying that this is a contradiction because while the United States appears as the champion in the defense of free trade, it will allow the implementation of protectionist measures that can be labeled as a barrier to trade.

When Foreign Minister Jose Miguel Insulza was asked about this issue, he said that the Chilean Foreign Ministry is preparing a diplomatic note, which could have been ready yesterday.

Regarding the measures of the State of Florida, Insulza noted that in a federated country, a state cannot adopt unilateral resolutions that violate the agreements

reached by the central government with other countries in accordance with the WTO.

Regarding the poisoned grapes case, Martabit met yesterday with his U.S. counterpart Ed Casey to discuss this specific issue on instructions from Minister Insulza to find a solution through diplomatic channels.

### Colombia

#### Colombian Court Eliminates Rider, Paves Way for Trial

PA0302031896 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravisión  
Television Canal A Network in Spanish  
0230 GMT 3 Feb 96

[From the "CM& Newscast"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Attention, the justice branch's body of laws had a rider that outlined the writs of prohibition from the Accusations Committee, stating a case was closed. The article prevented a new trial against the president. The Constitutional Court annulled the rider this evening, thus paving the way for a trial against the head of state.

The Accusations Committee will have to initiate an investigation against President Ernesto Samper. The Constitutional Court annulled this evening the rider added to the justice branch's body of laws, which gave the writs of prohibition the character of a closed case.

"CM& Newscast" has learned that the Constitutional Court unanimously ruled that the writs of prohibition are not final decisions, much less resolutions that lead to the closure of a case. The court's ruling, which will not be revealed until Monday, when the changes made by the Constitutional Court body of laws will be revealed, compels the Chamber of Representatives' Accusations Committee to revoke its previous decision and resume the legal proceedings against President Ernesto Samper for the alleged infiltration of drug trafficking money in his electoral campaign.

The ruling will also include the investigations conducted by the Accusations Committee against high court magistrates and the prosecutor general of the nation.

#### Colombian Accusations Committee 'Under Fire'

PA0202204696 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravisión  
Television Canal A Network in Spanish  
1730 GMT 2 Feb 96

[Report by Ana Fernanda Valderrama; from the "National Newscast"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Accusations Committee continues to come under fire. Now we know that the

names of two committee members have appeared in Julian Murcillo's cellular telephone list of calls.

Representatives Martha Catalina Daniels and Roberto Moya, both members of the Accusations Committee whose telephone numbers appeared in Julian Murcillo's cellular telephone statements of account, today denied having held any exchange with the alleged Cali cartel figurehead.

[Begin recording] [Representative Martha Catalina Daniels] I have never had any contacts with drug traffickers, much less am I going to engage in one now when the situation is so difficult.

[Representative Roberto Moya] I am a magistrate of the Republic, and it is evident that we are being accused mostly to discredit the group that is investigating the president of the Republic who is the natural judge [juez natural]. [end recording]

There are some who believe that there is a plot behind the publication of the list of telephone numbers.

[Begin recording] [Conservative Congressman Jorge Humberto Mantilla] I believe that, unfortunately, what we have here are shady hands inside the Office of the Prosecutor General. Any time the Accusations Committee is about to make a major announcement allegations of this type start to appear. [end recording]

The telephone call list evidence appears at a time when a controversy has broken out related to requests for the resignation of two Liberals from the Accusations Committee to give way to a Conservative and an Independent, just as Representatives Ingrid Betancourt and Guillermo Martinez Guerra have been requesting. Both representatives are currently on a hunger strike.

The Liberals announced today that they have no intention of resigning from the committee.

[Being recording] [Liberal Accusations Committee Member Lazaro Calderon] I personally proposed before the Liberal Parliamentarian Council that we could not resign because it would be accepting beforehand that we acted in an impartial manner.

[Unidentified Liberal representative] I believe that the persons elected for the committee have been adequately elected. They are all competent individuals; most are lawyers. [end recording]

The Accusations Committee is schedule to meet next Tuesday to reach to a unanimous decision on the issue.

**Colombia's Sarria, Implicated in Samper Case,  
Murdered**

PA0302012796 Santa Fe de Bogota Radio Cadena  
Nacional in Spanish 2220 GMT 2 Feb 96

[Report by Alba Lucia Rojas]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Rojas] The latest report released by the Santa Fe de Bogota Metropolitan Police is that Humberto Vargas Rojas, age 45, identified with citizenship No. 19,141,618 of Bogota, was attacked on 98th Street, No. 48-D-74, in La Floresta Neighborhood. He was accompanied by a slender woman of approximately 45 years of age, 1.60 meters tall. She was identified as Elizabeth Montoya de Sarria.

After being attacked by a firearm, Mrs. Montoya de Sarria continued on to Avenue No. 48-(12)-98-08, and entered Apartment No. 300D. According to the investigations conducted by the DAS [Administrative Department of Security]; three persons may have carried out the attack with firearms. These people were driving a brown Mazda with license plate number BDW-890. That is the latest report released by the Santa Fe de Bogota Metropolitan Police.

[Unidentified anchorman] Alba Lucia, you said three persons carried out the attack north of Santa Fe de Bogota?

[Rojas] According to the investigations released in the last few minutes by the DAS, three persons may have been the ones who carried out the attack on Elizabeth Montoya de Sarria and Mr. Humberto Vargas Rojas, age 45.

[Anchorman Juan Gossain] Alba Lucia, could you hold on just a second?

[Rojas] Sure, Juan.

[Gossain] Alba Lucia is currently at the Santa Fe de Bogota Metropolitan Police Directorate. We have Dr. Marco Tulio Gutierrez, director of the DAS, on the line now. Dr. Gutierrez, good afternoon.

[Gutierrez] Good afternoon.

[Gossain] How did the incidents take place? Was the DAS the one that conducted the investigations?

[Gutierrez] At 1730 yesterday, 1 February, Prosecutor No. 284 requested the support of the DAS corpse-removal group, which was on duty yesterday. They went to 48F Avenue and 98 Street in the area known as Ande Rio Negro. Once there, they removed the corpses of a woman and a man. Today, the authorities were able to determine the identities of the persons, which the public already knows about.

We have designated a team which has already begun carrying out the investigations in order to promptly determine the perpetrators of these unfortunate incidents.

[Unidentified anchorman] The action took place [words indistinct].

[Gutierrez] [words indistinct] ...at the request of Prosecutor No. 284 to support the DAS corpse-removal group. This group showed up at the address given them, and there they removed the corpses. The bodies were turned over to Legal Medicine. [Words indistinct] The identity of the persons, as you have informed the public, was determined today.

[Gossain] It has just been reported from the Santa Fe de Bogota Metropolitan Police that there are clues showing that three persons perpetrated the murders. Do you have information on that?

[Gutierrez] No, Juan. I do not believe it is appropriate to make any statement on that without having a certainty over the incidents themselves. What is clear is that the DAS has immediately assumed the relevant investigations with our best men, and we have declared our units to be in a state of emergency to attempt to investigate the incident as soon as possible.

[Gossain] Dr. Marco Tulio Gutierrez, the fact that the identification of the bodies took 24 hours means Mrs. Montoya and Mr. Vargas did not have identification documents on them?

[Gutierrez] Yes. Santa Fe de Bogota is a city in which a huge number of persons are turned over to Legal Medicine. This is a job that, in many cases, takes hours and even days. That explains how the identification of the man was quickly obtained. It was not until this afternoon that the identity of Mrs. Montoya de Sarria was obtained.

[Unidentified anchorman] You initially proceeded as though it were a crime of passion?

[Gutierrez] No. We simply received the request from Prosecutor No. 284 asking us to cooperate with them with the DAS corpse-removal group. I cannot get ahead of myself, because I would be irresponsible.

[Gossain] I understand you perfectly well. The persons who called to report that the bodies were in that apartment in northern Santa Fe de Bogota on 98th Street and 48F Avenue called you or did they call the Santa Fe de Bogota police?

[Gutierrez] No, the DAS did not receive any calls other than that of Prosecutor No. 284. We did not receive any other information regarding this murder. I reiterate,

we just received an official request for cooperation by Prosecutor No. 284.

[Unidentified anchorman] Have you spoken to the neighbors? What did they say?

[Gutierrez] No. I repeat, we are conducting the investigations. Our best men are doing the job, and we hope we can provide information to the public as soon as possible.

[Anchorman] Dr. Gutierrez, do you at the DAS know who the owner of that apartment where the bodies were found?

[Gutierrez] This is all part of the work we are doing. I reiterate, the intelligence division has declared itself in a state of emergency in association with the Judicial Police, and we hope to give you all the details of this unfortunate incident.

[Gossain] Dr. Gutierrez, thank you very much for your cooperation.

[Gutierrez] You are welcome, Juan.

[Madrid EFE in Spanish at 2318 GMT on 2 February in a Santa Fe de Bogota-dated 120-word report notes that "Santa Fe de Bogota radio stations reported today that the clandestine organization Dignity for Colombia has claimed responsibility for the murder of Elizabeth Montoya de Sarria, who had spoken with President Ernesto Samper Pizano over the telephone about the narcoscandal." The report continues: "This unknown terrorist group is the same one that claimed responsibility for the attack on Samper's Attorney Antonio Jose Cancino in early September.")]

#### **Husband of Colombia's Sarria Asks U.S. for Protection**

PA0302225496 Santa Fe de Bogota EL TIEMPO  
in Spanish 3 Feb 96

[Received via Internet]

[FBIS Translated Text] Jesus Amado Sarria Agredo, husband of Elizabeth Montoya, telephoned the "QAP News" television newscast from prison at 1500 on 2 February from El Barne Prison in Tunja and said Jorge Zuluaga, "Guayacan," perpetrated his wife's murder and asked the U.S. Government for protection for his children.

[Sarria] This is Jesus Sarria.

[QAP] How are you?

[Sarria] Very bad, because my wife was murdered.

[QAP] How did it happen?

[Sarria] She was murdered yesterday afternoon in the Santa Fe de Bogota apartment.

[QAP] Where is she?

[Sarria] At the morgue. She was badly wounded.

[QAP] What are you going to do?

[Sarria] I do not know. I fear for my children.

[QAP] Where are they?

[Sarria] I would like the U.S. Government to help me take them out of the country. They were born in the United States, and I have to take them out of the country, because they are in danger.

[QAP] Are you willing to be a U.S. Government witness?

[Sarria] Only if they protect my children.

[QAP] But who killed Mrs. Elizabeth?

[Sarria] It could have been the government for the things she knew. I know the person who killed her is a man called Jorge Zuluaga, alias Guayacan.

[QAP] Do you fear for your life?

[Sarria] Not as long as I am here in El Barne Prison, but I know the government is studying the possibility of moving the prison. I would fear for my life if that happens.

#### **Colombia's Samper Orders Inquiry on Sarria's Murder**

PA0302021796 Madrid EFE in Spanish  
2354 GMT 2 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Barranquilla (Colombia), 2 Feb (EFE) — In this northern city today Colombian President Ernesto Samper ordered an immediate police operation to reach a swift resolution of the murder of Elizabeth Montoya de Sarria, an alleged interlocutor in a "narcocassette," after police authorities briefed him about it today.

Mrs. Sarria was gunned down on 1 February in an apartment in northern Santa Fe de Bogota along with a man, but her death was not confirmed until 24 hours later.

Samper learned about this crime in Barranquilla where he traveled today with several ministers to present, among other projects, a million-dollar investment plan in the electricity sector of the country's northern coastal area.

Colombian Interior Minister Horacio Serpa told journalists in Barranquilla that the president immediately

contacted National Police Director General Rosso Jose Serrano and ordered a swift operation to arrest the culprits and solve this case.

Serpa added that the government vehemently rejects this criminal act that "reflects the atrocious levels that crime in our country has reached."

Mrs. Sarria was apparently gunned down by three men who chased her into a building in northern Santa Fe de Bogota. They also gunned down her companion whom the authorities identified as Humberto Vargas Rojas.

The woman, who was the owner of a hotel on San Andres and Providencia Islands, was shot 12 times.

Mrs. Sarria, wife of former Police Sergeant Jesus Amado Sarria, who is in prison for drug trafficking, was identified as the president's interlocutor in telephone conversations that were tapped by unidentified persons and linked to the "narcoscandal."

The recorded conversations that dealt with the 1994 presidential elections were exposed last August.

**Colombian Prosecutor, Investigator on Sarria's Murder**

PA0302025996 Santa Fe de Bogota Radio Cadena Nacional in Spanish 2300 GMT 2 Feb 96

[Report by Edgar Moreno from the Prosecutor General's Office in Santa Fe de Bogota; from the "RCN Radio Events" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] A meeting between Prosecutor General Alfonso Valdivieso Sarmiento and Hernan Jimenez, national director of the Technical Investigations Corp of the Prosecutor General's Office, concluded minutes ago. Although the officials issued no statements to the media, we have learned that the investigation of the Elizabeth Montoya de Sarria killing, which occurred at the intersection of 98th Street and 48 Avenue in northern Santa Fe de Bogota yesterday, is advancing.

The investigation started after prosecutor No. 284 [words indistinct] of the rapid deployment unit identified the victim. The Prosecutor General's Office had summoned Elizabeth Montoya de Sarria as a witness in the case of Santiago Medina. The late wife of Jesus Amado Sarria was to confirm statements by the former treasurer regarding the alleged use of drug trafficking money in the past presidential campaign.

**Colombia's Serpa, Samper Deny Link to Sarria's Murder**

PA0302201196 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravisión Television Canal A Network in Spanish 1800 GMT 3 Feb 96

[From the "Cripton Newscast"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Interior Minister Horacio Serpa Uribe reacted in Barranquilla today to Jesus Amado Sarria's serious accusation that the government is linked to the murder of his wife, Elizabeth Montoya:

[Begin recording] [Serpa] I was not told firsthand; I have only heard reports. This is totally absurd. Who would believe that? No one. Everybody knows that this is a democratic government, that Ernesto Samper Pizano's government is honest and clean. I repeat: This is absurd.

[Correspondent] What has the president said about Elizabeth Montoya's death?

[Serpa] That this action should be condemned and thoroughly investigated so that the motive for the crime and its authors can be discovered as soon as possible.

[Correspondent] Were you a good friend of hers?

[Serpa] No, I was not a friend of hers. I met her once during a political event in San Andres. [end recording]

[Madrid EFE in Spanish at 1750 GMT on 3 February carries a Santa Fe de Bogota-dated report confirming that "Colombian President Ernesto Samper today rejected 'with indignation' attempts to link his government to the murder of Elizabeth Montoya de Sarria, a key witness in the 'narcoscandal.'" The report adds that "Samper announced that he will fully support the police and judicial authorities in the investigation 'up to the last consequences' in order to shed light on this crime."]

**Colombia's Samper Lauds U.S. 'Neutrality' Over Crisis**

PA0302032396 Paris AFP in Spanish 1415 GMT 2 Feb 96

[By Jose Luis Varela]

[FBIS Translated Text] Santa Fe de Bogota, 2 Feb (AFP) — Colombian President Ernesto Samper told AFP that at any time and under any circumstances he would be willing to admit that there is a lack of conditions for governability for a possible resignation, but that right now, such conditions do exist. [sentence as received]

In an exclusive interview with AFP, the Colombian president said he does not want people to think that his refusal to resign — as various opposition groups have

asked him — is due to a supreme act of selfishness: "If I thought it would serve the country, I would resign without hesitation."

The 45-year-old president has just experienced the toughest week of his term, after his closest associate, former Defense Minister Fernando Botero, accused him of planning the receipt of drug trafficking money for his electoral campaign.

Nevertheless, he said that "I never thought about resigning; first because I am innocent of the charges against me and, second, because resigning at this moment would be an act of cowardice."

"I would resign if something made me think I could not handle the country as I have handled it for 18 months, but, given this uncertainty, I do not think anything will happen worse than what we have faced, and we managed to survive."

The president said he did not seek a polarization of Congress or the people, but he believed that this phenomenon is unavoidable under the current circumstances.

"I do not seek a polarization of the people, but I understand that many people who are not interested in the development model I have been implementing and who would rather return to a neoliberal model are behind this crisis."

Referring to Congress — which is currently debating his situation — he considered it normal that there are diverging positions, and he believes he "will have a fair trial."

Referring to the lack of credibility regarding the justice of a Congress in which members of his party have the majority, he said he has sought to give it as much honesty as possible, proposing that the confidentiality of proceedings be lifted and that the Accusations Committee (which acquitted him in December) be reorganized.

"The only thing I cannot change is the fact that Congress is the president's natural judge."

Consulted about the possibility that the United States would find it convenient to maintain a politically weakened president, he said "it would be a sad reason to remain in power; I do not think my situation strengthens or weakens the United States, because this is a Colombian issue, and we will solve it among Colombians."

He reiterated that, likewise, the certification (endorsement that the United States gives for the struggle against drug trafficking and that will reportedly be denied to Colombia) is a unilateral decision by that country.

He said the Colombian Government will become involved in no clique to exert pressure for a favorable decision, adding his government can show results achieved in the struggle against drugs that no other country can show.

Referring to the United States' position regarding the crisis, he said: "What I have seen and the statements I have learned about make me think it has maintained a neutral position, and I applaud that position of neutrality, which has recently intensified."

The president said he has no fear about actions from the Prosecutor General's Office, the agency in charge of gathering evidence against him: "With the leaks one knows beforehand what the charges will be, and I know that we will hear a lot about slander, manipulation, and fantasy games."

Finally, asked about his responsibility, either by action or by omission, regarding the use of drug trafficking money in his campaign, he said: "I am ready to assume political responsibility, based on a certain analysis — meaning, if it is proved that drug money was used, it must be ascertained that it undermined the capacity to struggle against drug trafficking, but that was not the case."

#### **Colombian President: Ex-Defense Minister 'Innocent'**

PA0302032896 Paris AFP in Spanish  
1418 GMT 2 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Santa Fe de Bogota, 2 Feb (AFP) — Colombian President Ernesto Samper told AFP that he believed former Defense Minister Fernando Botero was innocent. Botero is currently in prison for his complicity as director general of President Samper's electoral campaign.

Botero began to steal the show last 22 January when he accused President Samper of having partially financed his campaign with drug trafficking money from the Cali cartel. Until then, Botero had resolutely defended Samper.

Samper pointed out: "I believe Fernando Botero is innocent, although he has admitted some of his crimes in his statements. This fact leads me to believe that my previous conviction was not so well founded. In any event, I cannot take the place of justice, which should decide his case."

Samper said neither he nor anyone from his administration has spoken with Botero after he made these statements, which Samper had described earlier as "slandorous and vile."

Samper acknowledged, however, that these statements "have caused confusion and uncertainty."

**Colombia's Samper Interviewed on CNN**

PA0202143796 Santa Fe de Bogota Inrvision  
Television Cadena 1 in Spanish 1230 GMT 2 Feb 96

[Interview with President Ernesto Samper by Lucia Newman, CNN Latin America Bureau chief, in Santa Fe de Bogota on 1 February; from the "Caracol 7:30" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Newman] Mr. President, you have insisted on your right to a fair trial. But how can the Colombian people trust this Congressional investigation, after many of those who will judge you gave you a standing ovation on Tuesday in Congress? In addition, many of these congressmen are also being investigated for their alleged drug ties.

[Samper] The applause is something very common. The president always opens Congressional sessions and commonly legislators applaud the president's speech. We can say this is a courtesy applause. It cannot be interpreted as a judicial verdict.

Secondly, I did not select Congress as my judge.

[Newman] Mr. President, you have said Colombia will not be able to withstand this institutional crisis for much longer. Do you still refuse to step down, even temporarily, as several sectors of society are demanding? Many believe that your presence is simply extending this crisis.

[Samper] My resignation would worsen the situation rather than resolve it. This is logical. As long as I am innocent, as long as there is no formal accusation or evidence against me, quitting would mean that anyone may, in a bold manner, report the president of the Republic forcing him to leave.

[Newman] Your relations with Washington have never been excellent. Now, well-placed sources in Washington have told us there is no chance that Colombia will be fully certified this year. What is your reaction to this?

[Samper] Well, the relations of Colombian presidents with the United States in the last 15 years have not been a honeymoon, because regrettably the issue of drug trafficking has been put at the top of the list. For us, the issue of the certification is a U.S. Government unilateral decision, which we respect. Regardless of this decision, Colombian maintains an all-out struggle against drug trafficking. We have been waging this struggle for some time now.

I also want to point out the fact that we have accomplishments to show. In the face of this accomplishments,

I am confident the United States will not lose its best ally in the struggle against drug trafficking, which Colombia has waged, continues to wage, and must continue to wage.

[Newman] The United States has made it clear they believe all you have done is not enough. In addition, they made it clear they suspect the president of the Republic is involved in drug trafficking?

[Samper] Well, but how can a president be involved [pauses] it would be an act of masochism for a president to be involved in drug trafficking, yet to have done what I have done in the struggle against drug trafficking.

[Newman] Some people have interpreted your Tuesday's address as a sign you may be considering the possibility to resign. Mr. President, is there any circumstance under which you would consider this possibility?

[Samper] Those who feel that way are generally my enemies. I do not accept that the president of Colombia — as I would not accept that the president of any democratic country, be it the United States, Mexico, or Argentina — can be submitted to a process of moral lynching by some media, as happened elsewhere in Latin America.

[Newman] Can you assure that you would not resign your post under any circumstance?

[Samper] After I am proven innocent, I am ready to consider the conditions of governability of the country for the future. I have even stated that I am ready to convene a referendum so that — after I am proven innocent — the Colombian people relegitimize my mandate. This would be a direct appeal to the electorate for a political legitimization.

[Newman] Can it then be thought that you would resign if results were unfavorable to you in a referendum?

[Samper] Of course.

**Colombian Senator: Congress Must Help Resolve Crisis**

PA0302022096 Santa Fe de Bogota Radio Cadena Nacional in Spanish 2300 GMT 2 Feb 96

[From the "RCN Radio Events" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] Cali — Senator Claudia Blum has said she agrees with the Senate's decision to abstain from holding a political debate on the case of the president of the Republic at this time. [Words indistinct] formal trial against him, an advanced political debate could disqualify senators who could act as his judges should the Chamber of Representatives accuse the president. The senator added that Congress, as an

investigator and natural judge of the president, must help resolve the case involving him and must act with objectivity and calmness in doing so.

Should the Prosecutor General's Office present new evidence, the Chamber of Representatives must analyze the situation in a serious, careful, and responsible manner in the open for the entire country to see.

Congress is also experiencing a serious credibility crisis, and the Colombian people would not forgive its members for making superficial, partial, or unjustified decisions on such an important matter.

#### **Argentine Paper Interviews Colombian Ex-Minister's Lawyer**

PY0302005096 Buenos Aires CLARIN in Spanish  
2 Feb 96 p 18

[Interview with Fernando Londono Hoyos, lawyer of former Colombian Defense Minister Fernando Botero, by special correspondent Pablo Biffi "at his office"; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Biffi] How did Samper plan to obtain the support of the Cali cartel? Does Botero have concrete evidence of it?

[Londono] President Ernesto Samper sought it through treasurer Santiago Medina. Both of them are longtime friends of the Cali cartel. There are public documents proving that Dr. Samper has had contacts with the Rodriguez Orejuela's since 1984.

[Biffi] How did this relationship begin?

[Londono] This relationship started when Mr. Rodriguez Orejuela designated Dr. Samper as a member of the Workers Bank executive board. Executive board designations are not made just by chance. No one in a bank is so mad as to designate executive board members at random, looking for a name in the phone directory. Moreover, there are other precedents, because there is evidence that he received a check from Rodriguez Orejuela at the Intercontinental Hotel in Cali in 1982. Dr. Samper was the sponsor, defender, and political leader of the smugglers of San Andresito (a genuine smugglers' shopping center in the vicinity of Bogota), and everyone knows that smugglers launder drug traffickers' money. Hardly blinking an eye, the Cali cartel supplied something around \$10 million.

[Biffi] Did this occur between the first and second electoral rounds?

[Londono] Exclusively during that 21-day period.

[Biffi] Is there concrete evidence that Samper ordered negotiations with drug traffickers?

[Londono] Santiago Medina said that Samper and Botero gave him orders, but he said that it was basically Samper who did it. Furthermore, the money was to be used for oiling the electoral apparatus of the liberal sector, to which Botero was opposed. Yet the most important thing is that the case folder does not have one single bit of evidence that Botero was a friend to or had contacts with the Cali cartel or with its envoys, like Mr. Alberto Giraldo, who was sort of a public relations director for drug traffickers. All of these people just happen to be intimate friends of President Samper.

[Biffi] Isn't it necessary to have documents to prove that relationship?

[Londono] The point is that there is no document saying: "I, Ernesto Samper, am very thankful for the \$10 million that I was given to illegally win the elections in Colombia."

[Biffi] What business did Samper do with the Cali cartel in exchange for the money?

[Londono] The most important business is the policy through which drug traffickers are brought to court and whereby they are granted benefits like serving prison terms at home, or having their prison terms reduced, if they cooperate with the courts. There was also the Penal Proceedings Code, which was negotiated in Congress and which allowed so many lawmakers to stay for free at Cali's Intercontinental hotel, which is owned by the Rodriguez Orejuela's. Finally, the election of the attorney general and the comptroller general, who are two people involved in the "Trial 8000" because of their friendship ties with the Cali cartel.

[Biffi] Why have Cali cartel leaders been caught, despite all these agreements?

[Londono] The agreements with Samper were not broken. Botero asked for the defense portfolio in order to end the cartel. The pressure by Botero and by the United States left no other choice for the government. The United States told Samper that it needed evidence that he had no links with the Cali cartel and that nothing had been done. Samper then had no choice.

#### **Argentine Daily Interviews Colombian Police Chief** PY0202223196 Buenos Aires CLARIN in Spanish 1 Feb 96 p 25

[Interview with Colombian National Police chief General Rosso Jorge Serrano by unidentified special CLARIN correspondent in Bogota — date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [CLARIN] Does the political crisis affect the police in their struggle against drug trafficking?

[Serrano] It does not affect us because we continue to do our job, that is, fumigating, confiscating cocaine, seizing chemical products, and destroying processing laboratories.

[CLARIN] Nevertheless, a police incident — drug trafficker Santacruz Londono's escape — has caused a huge political ruckus.

[Serrano] Even though this escape mortified me, as the most astute and most intelligent detainee "has vanished," it cannot be interpreted by the police as a political incident. Our duty is to recapture him, without considering the political impact involved.

[CLARIN] Was there any corruption in this escape?

[Serrano] Escapes always involve corruption. That is obvious, and cannot be denied. Who initiated the corruption, and who was on the receiving end? The Attorney General's office [Fiscalia] and the Prosecutor's Office [Procuraduria] are in charge of investigating this.

[CLARIN] As the police are in charge of struggling against drug trafficking, how can police corruption by drug trafficking be prevented?

[Serrano] Within this entire corruption process, perhaps the police force was the first organization that indulged in corruption. And, in order to end drug trafficking, it was necessary to eliminate police corruption. This was the key to catching the Cali cartel leaders.

[CLARIN] Is it possible to trust in the DEA's honesty in the struggle against drug trafficking?

[Serrano] I have always trusted them because I worked with them for three years and they know my work methods and my beliefs. I have never had any problems with an international organization because I have convinced them of the fact that, working honestly, it is possible to gradually eliminate drug trafficking.

[CLARIN] Nevertheless, the United States believes Colombia is solely responsible for drug trafficking.

[Serrano] I believe this hypothesis has changed; we have managed to convince the international community that Colombia is not the only country involved in this problem. I have always said drug trafficking is a multinational problem because without chemicals, which are not processed in Colombia, there would not be any cocaine. There would also not be any money laundering, which is done through international banks. There would not be any cocaine without consumption, and consumption is high in other countries, not here.

[CLARIN] Will drug trafficking in Colombia end with the removal of the Cali cartel?

[Serrano] No. The Cali cartel will end, but not drug trafficking. Drug trafficking will end if consumption ends, money laundering is controlled, and open sales of illegal chemicals are banned.

#### Colombian Foreign Minister Defends Samper

PA0502030696 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish  
1538 GMT 4 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Santa Fe de Bogota, 4 Feb (NOTIMEX) — Colombian Foreign Minister Rodrigo Pardo strongly defended today the honesty of President Ernesto Samper, who is accused of having ties with drug trafficking mafias.

"Neither the country nor the world know the truth" regarding the charges that illegal money infiltrated into the campaign that led Samper to power in 1994, the diplomat asserted.

Pardo stated: "I doubt very much that this money ever existed in Samper's presidential campaign. We do not know the truth because, in fact, throughout all the months of this scandal we have lived in the midst of an elusive truth."

In a lengthy dialogue with the Colombian Radio Network (Caracol), the head of the country's diplomacy said he is convinced that "the president is innocent," and he will prove this during the trial carried out by Congress.

"If drug trafficking money had been used in the campaign with the candidate's consent, I am sure many of us would have done something to prevent this, but the truth is this did not occur," the foreign minister asserted.

He admitted that the confusion created regarding the scandal, "which the international community finds very difficult to understand," is eroding the image of the government and the country.

Regarding this issue, he deplored that only negative events are important for the journalists and international public opinion, yet Colombia's struggle to abolish drug trafficking has been unknown for years.

"The international media pays more attention to negative issues. A correspondent gets front page coverage if he talks about drug trafficking or guerrilla groups, but he forgets about good things like sports, literature, art, culture, and development," he added.

Pardo admitted that the function of eradicating that bad image falls on the Foreign Ministry; he reported that a lot of work is being carried out to achieve this, by strengthening the diplomatic career and a better preparation of the country's representatives in the world.

The charges against Samper, accused of allowing the receipt of large sums of money donated by the Cali cartel, provoked the worst political crisis in the country's modern history.

"The crisis is an opportunity to guide the country, to stop drug trafficking, to ensure we do not have image problems in the future like the ones we currently withstand," Pardo said. He is one of Samper's most trusted men.

The foreign minister was director of the Samper campaign's image and, as such, handled large sums of money destined for publicity, protocol, and other ancillary activities, through which he learned about internal aspects of the current president's political enterprise.

Referring to this issue he said his conscience is clear, although he admitted "there are critical problems in our mind because the country is ailing and a cool head is needed to quickly find the solutions."

Following the scandal, in which the main accusers were two of Samper's closest men, former Defense Minister Fernando Botero Zea and former campaign treasurer Santiago Medina, numerous Colombian sectors have demanded the president's immediate resignation, which was rejected by the foreign minister.

"It is a mistake to believe that changing the president or a few congressmen will solve a critical problem like drug trafficking, which is deeply rooted in many sectors of society," the Colombian foreign minister asserted.

Pardo was one of Botero's best friends. Botero is now in prison with former treasurer Medina. Referring to him, he said, "friendship is something that cannot be taken off like a shirt; that is why it is better not to give your personal opinions and wait until justice officials act."

Last, he termed as untrue the criticism from opposition groups, who say the president has been unable to rule, because he must dedicate most of his time to the defense of his campaign and to concentrating on the crisis.

"It is true that the crisis generates problems but, nevertheless, the government has ruled and the country is doing fine," the foreign minister concluded in his talk with the radio station.

#### Colombian Envoy, Police Plan Certification Strategy

PA0202144396 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision  
Television Canal A Network in Spanish  
1230 GMT 2 Feb 96

[From the "Caracol 7:30" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Station announcer Maria Lucia Fernandez] The "Caracol 7:30" newscast has learned that Colombian diplomacy has an ace up its sleeve that will serve to seek the U.S. certification. The formula came up following a discrete meeting between the narcotics police chiefs and Colombian Ambassador in Washington Carlos Lleras de la Fuente.

[Begin recording] [Police Inspector General Carlos Alberto Pulido] We have established a strategy, consisting in making the reports on Colombia's the war on drugs the basic and fundamental reasons to obtain the certification.

[Reporter Jaime Orlando Gaitan] The Colombian ambassador and the Police top officers analyzed the winning card for several hours. The country's ace would be the results of the narcotics operations, and not in the lobbying that businessmen and the top government began to conduct.

[Lleras] The country's performance in 1995 was excellent, and this is what we must show.

[Gaitan] The agreed upon strategy is encountering difficulties because of the recent escape of [Cali cartel boss] Jose Santacruz Londono and the political crisis that grew worse in the wake of the statements by Fernando Botero [former manager of the presidential campaign of President Ernesto Samper Pizano].

[Lleras] The U.S. Government has voiced its total neutrality with regard to Colombia's internal political crisis. This is a domestic issue that must be resolved based by our institutions.

[Gaitan] Is there any danger that narcotics assistance will be halted.

[Colonel Leonardo Gallego, Counternarcotics Police commander] They have not told us anything of the sort, but on the contrary we have continued receiving U.S. assistance and exchange of information, something that is indispensable to continue this struggle.

[Gaitan] On Sunday, Lleras de la Fuente will depart for the United States to begin the tortuous path toward certification, with the ace up his sleeve consisting of the results of the war on drugs. [end recording]

**Colombian Minister Discusses Trade, U.S.  
Certification**

PA0202202296 Santa Fe de Bogota EL TIEMPO  
in Spanish 1 Feb 96

[Received via Internet]

[FBIS Translated Text] New Foreign Trade Minister Morris Harf Meyer has voiced optimism regarding the U.S. certification despite Colombia's internal difficulties.

According to the official, the possibility that the certification will not be granted is very remote, if one takes into consideration the efforts the country has made to fight drugs and achieve economic stability.

He acknowledged that there is a major lag in the exchange rate, which has hurt Colombian exporters, and affirmed that the 1995 devaluation only compensated for that year's inflation rate. "That policy hurt Colombian industrialists who sell abroad because it made them lose competitiveness."

He admitted that the Bank of the Republic's Board of Directors handled the topic of the exchange rate well with regard to the establishment of an exchange range, which is an adequate mechanism to avoid the fluctuations in the price of the dollar.

He said that he will pay special attention to trade with Venezuela, considering the existence of two problems that demand a prompt solution. First, the Venezuelan businessmen have delayed paying the sum of \$15 million to Colombian exporters. Second, the neighboring country has implemented devaluations, making our exports less competitive.

**To Set an Agenda**

In fact, the main business associations have asked the minister to settle the commercial differences with Venezuela and agree on an agenda for negotiations to expedite the reestablishment of the payment orders with that country and normalize exports, which have come to a virtual halt.

Analdex [National Association of Exporters], Confecamaras [Confederation of Chambers of Commerce], and Fedemetal [Colombian Federation of Metallurgical Industries] concurred that it is urgent that the Central Bank of Venezuela reinstate as soon as possible the payment orders in place of the time-consuming letters of credit.

In addition, the senior official said that he will promote the Exports Promotion Plan to raise the demand for Colombian products abroad.

The new official considered it too early to discuss the possibility of joining the North American Free Trade Agreement, which seeks to create a single market among Mexico, Canada, and the United States. He added, however, that one of his priorities is to move forward with the process of regional as well as continental integration.

On this subject, he said that the Third Summit of the Americas to be held next March in Cartagena will be the ideal place to expand contacts that will ultimately permit American integration. He recognized that although ideal results have not been obtained at the Andean Group level, Colombia has been able to take advantage of this process of regional integration, which is reflected in the increased commercial exchange in this part of the continent.

**Colombia's Samper Reasserts Social Development  
Plans**

PA0302021696 Santa Fe de Bogota Radiodifusora  
Nacional de Colombia in Spanish  
2350 GMT 2 Feb 96

[Speech by President Ernesto Samper Pizano in Barranquilla; broadcast in progress — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] ....dear city of Barranquilla to fulfill all the offers I had the opportunity to formulate in recent months, during the meeting we held with the labor unions and representatives of the city's social groups. I will not stubbornly repeat at this time the list of the nation's contributions that we have come this afternoon to fulfill, as is normally said, these pledges.

However, it is appropriate to mention what it will mean for Barranquilla to fulfill its old dream of having a complete aqueduct and sewer plan — regarding which I have made a commitment with the mayor. [Words indistinct] Barranquilla groups which I govern will contribute the resources, which they pledged in [words indistinct] document so that we can say that all the Barranquilla citizens' water and sewer problems have been solved by the first quarter of 1998.

Furthermore, we have brought contributions for programs dealing with the social solidarity network. The network has become the [word indistinct] banner of my government, which is committed, as no other has been in many years, to defending the interests of Colombia's most needy groups.

Moreover, I recently said we cannot rule out as motives or factors for motivation, regarding the crisis we currently face, the fact that there still are groups in Colombia interested in preventing a social development model;

preventing us from giving, as we currently are, social emphasis to our political plan.

Our social pledge, stated in the Social Leap, which is my administration's social plan, is also stated in the Social Pact, which is a great opportunity for consensus between the workers, the government, and businessmen, so we may handle vital issues like inflation and competitiveness. Our pledge, fulfilled through the basic instrument for the social solidarity network, is reaching the poor people of Colombia, the senior citizens of Colombia, the mothers who are heads of household in Colombia, the children without nutritional supplements in Colombia, the people who lack ownership titles in Colombia, and the Indians and the blacks, who are neglected majorities in Colombia.

I repeat that this definite social pledge is the one which currently allows the government to overcome the crisis, with the support of the needy people in Colombia — above all, with the Colombian countryside's support. We are obviously capable of handling a crisis of this size, to show the world Colombia does not require shock treatments to solve its internal problems and to make sure justice prevails. [applause]

There are two visions of the crisis we currently face. The apocalyptic vision — which wants the crisis to worsen until it ends in chaos and anarchy and which is really interested in provoking episodes that traumatize public opinion, creating uncertainty and fear, even terrorism — of certain groups, which demand the moral lynching of the main protagonists in this crisis; which want to see the [word indistinct] reinstated in Colombia, so the shouting masses could again sacrifice innocents, based on their own concept of morals and justice, to satisfy their own need to remove the main protagonists in this crisis.

There is also another vision — the one that we have and that is fortunately shared by the majority of Colombians, meaning that this crisis should be institutionally resolved. This crisis must be resolved resorting to the norms that have made Colombia a democracy and a civilized world. This crisis must be resolved resorting to the appropriate process, guaranteeing the right to a defense, privacy, and the possibility of refuting corrupt evidence because justice cannot be turned into a show, and we must give the judges the ability to judge, guarantee the investigators the ability to investigate, and, obviously, guarantee the people's right to defend themselves.

Therefore, Colombian institutions are being tested by this crisis and, therefore, from this corner of the Caribbean, which is the capital of the Colombian Caribbean, I want to appeal to all Colombians' restraint and good sense; invite them to pledge their support

for institutional solutions to this crisis; and, well, invite them to fulfill their task and work with discretion.

Likewise, I want to invite investigators to carry out their actions in a fair and objective manner.

We tell all those who think the crisis will distract the government's efforts to fulfill its social goals and pledges that they are wrong. I am here, in Atlantico Department, in the city of Barranquilla, fulfilling the pledges in my government agenda to all the residents of Curramba and this dear Caribbean land. [applause]

In recent months I have not lost a single minute of the government's agenda by concentrating on the crisis. Quite the contrary, we have redoubled our efforts, concentrating all possibilities and vital capabilities to show all Colombia that the government continues its work, that the fulfillment of pledges will not be stopped, and that the social agenda for which the Colombian voters cast their ballot on 7 August will remain invariable until 7 August 1998 at 1500. [applause]

Thank you, then, comrades, for this warm welcome. I know that some groups in the country feel uncertain, but you must also remember the phrase, the beautiful poem, which says the night is never so dark as just before the dawn, and I know that, no matter how dark we may see the night we currently face, we are just before the dawn, the dawn of truth, the dawn of justice, the dawn of innocence; and then we will be able to contemplate that dawn, which will be as any good dawn may be, a Caribbean sunrise, a Barranquilla sunrise, in Tajamanes de Boca de Ceniza.

Then it will be clear that Colombia certainly has the capability to forge ahead, regardless of the difficulties I may meet. Thank you. [applause]

## Ecuador

**Ecuador Accepts Peruvian Arms Control Proposal**  
PA0402224496 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish  
1601 GMT 4 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Quito, 4 Feb (NOTIMEX) — Foreign Minister Galo Leoro Franco reported, in statements published here today, that Ecuador has accepted Peru's proposal to comprise a mixed military commission that will assume control of the two countries' weapons purchases.

The head of Ecuadoran diplomacy told the newspaper EL COMERCIO: "We have studied (Peruvian) Foreign Minister Francisco Tudela's proposal with the defense minister, and we are willing to comprise the mixed commission suggested by Peru."

"The same commission will also suggest other measures of trust to their respective governments, in order to strengthen the process of peace and understanding between the two countries," he added.

Last December, the Ecuadoran foreign minister proposed to Peru the search for a mechanism that would enable the two Andean countries to openly purchase weapons, after they had mutually accused each other of launching an arms buildup.

Ecuador and Peru are involved in a peace process following an undeclared war that waged a year ago in Alto Cenepa, at their common border in the Amazon region.

Foreign Minister Leoro Franco revealed Ecuador's acceptance to comprise a mixed commission for weapons control, after the National Security Council met last week to analyze the issue.

The agreement could be signed at Trujillo, Peru, in March, on the occasion of Ecuadoran President Sixto Duran-Ballen's participation in a meeting of Andean Pact presidents, the newspaper said.

The Ecuadoran foreign minister admitted the current Ecuadoran Government's impending conclusion of its mandate, in August, limits the talks' perspectives of solving the territorial dispute between the two countries.

"Nevertheless, the government's political will is to carry on," the diplomat asserted.

Leoro Franco termed as positive the attitude adopted by the two countries' Armed Forces "to the extent that they have accepted new military service books that prove this attitude."

"Furthermore, the guarantor countries' military commanders are carrying out, and will continue to carry out, joint visits with high-ranking Ecuadoran and Peruvian military officers, to sponsor better relations," he added. [passage omitted]

#### **Ecuadoran Minister on Wounding of Peruvian Soldiers**

*PY0302005596 Quito Voz de Los Andes in Spanish  
2300 GMT 2 Feb 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] Army Commander General Paco Moncayo asked the Ecuadoran and Peruvian Armed Forces today to avoid mobilizations in the areas where mines were planted to prevent accidents.

He said the wise thing for the military forces of the two countries to do is to take preventive measures and to give clear instructions to personnel to avoid any mobilizations in the mine areas.

General Moncayo made this comment to reporters after five Peruvian soldiers were wounded on 27 February. He said: This is an accident I really regret. It is not right for these boys, who are not in the midst of a military conflict but on the healthy road to peace, to suffer the loss of their arms and legs.

Defense Minister Alfonso Alarcon has said that this incident will not affect the peace process between Ecuador and Peru after the military conflict last year. Alarcon said: I don't think the process will be affected at all. There is a security regulation on which the generals of the two sides agreed.

#### **Ecuador's President Confirms Andean Summit Attendance**

*PY0302005396 Quito Voz de Los Andes in Spanish  
2300 GMT 2 Feb 96*

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] President Sixto Duran-Ballen confirmed today that Ecuador will attend the Eighth Andean Group Presidential Summit to be held in Lima in March. [passage indistinct]

Duran-Ballen made this comment in a speech he delivered at Government House during a ceremony marking the signing of a credit agreement for building the (Daule-Taripa) hydroelectric plant, which will be financed with Andean Development Corporation credit. [passage omitted]

#### **Ecuadoran Judicial Head on Dahik 'Secret Accounts'**

*PY0302020396 Quito Voz de Los Andes in Spanish  
2300 GMT 2 Feb 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] Ecuadoran Supreme Court President Carlos Solorzano said today he does not accept the transfer of the custody of the microfilms containing the secret accounts of the discretionary funds handled by ex-Vice President Alberto Dahik.

The documents containing the accounts are kept in the vault of the Central Bank under police protection on express instructions from President Sixto Duran-Ballen, who proclaimed himself the custodian of the documents from 2 October 1995, thus preventing the law from having access to the alleged evidence of corruption by Dahik.

I do not accept the transfer of the custody, said Solorzano upon commenting on the presidential decree signed by Duran-Ballen, who, on 31 January, named Solorzano the personal custodian of the vice presidential secret accounts.

**Peru****Peruvian Daily on U.S. 'Arbitrary,' 'Erratic' Diplomacy***PY0202110196 Lima EXPRESO in Spanish  
21 Jan 96 p A38*

[Commentary by Fernando Fuenzalida Vollmar: "It Is By Your Deeds That...."]

[FBIS Translated Text] The U.S. media has been granting the Berenson case a lot of coverage in the last few days. U.S. human rights organizations have protested with the same enthusiasm they showed a few years ago in defending the right of [Shining Path leader Abimael Guzman] Comrade Gonzalo to execute peasants or cause power outages and questioned the right of the Peruvian Government to combat terrorism.

The U.S. Department of State has expressed its annoyance over the holding of secret military trials. It demanded that Berenson be tried by a civilian court in a public trial. And if possible, with "Perry Mason-type" lawyers, a jury and the ever-present television cameras, thus allowing some to make "a little" profit out of it. The more moderate have resorted to semantic jargon by stating: "It is not possible for a foreigner to be tried for 'treason against the fatherland.'"

There is absolutely no question about Berenson's guilt. Her television appearance left no room for doubt. Moreover, the naivete of maintaining the existence of "nonviolent" terrorism is a cruel insult to the relatives of all terrorist victims.

Nevertheless, the arguments raised by the U.S. media are no less naive. One wonders: How can it be that such a nice-looking, typically American girl educated in a nice neighborhood like Manhattan end up in a such an underdeveloped and ugly jail? There is only one answer: It is the secret military courts that are to blame for this. The U.S. media presumes that military courts are applicable only in dictatorships.

**The Stick and the Carrot**

The truth of the matter is that both U.S. foreign and domestic policies are becoming more and more like the caricatures of these policies on U.S. television. Faceless courts are no Peruvian invention. The system was first used in Italy on the advice of the United States. The U.S. Department of State and the CIA are prompt to recommend solutions that are criticized in their own country and found "unfair" when they are enforced against U.S. citizens in foreign lands because of their involvement in subversive activities.

As for protests and complaints, the United States applies at its own whim the measuring stick — or the "stick"

[preceding word in English] and the "carrot" [preceding word in English], to use U.S. political jargon. A good example of this are the interminable discussions held in Washington on the advice and support granted by the CIA and the U.S. Department of State in Managua to torture and kill U.S. citizens abhorred by their own government.

Another example is how the World Bank is pressuring India to use its nuclear technology for peaceful purposes and the coincidental silence over the uninterrupted series of Chinese explosions in a province that was seized from Tibet. A final example would be the ambiguous role the U.S. Government has upheld as a "guarantor" country in the Peruvian-Ecuadorian conflict regarding the Kfir planes case. Without passing judgment, can Peruvians seriously take into consideration such an arbitrary and erratic diplomacy?

Lately, "human rights" in the United States has become an issue that can be defined at whim. Like Humpty Dumpty — the puppet in the story "Alice in Wonderland" [as published] — each individual is entitled to invent his own language. Every individual has on the tip of the tongue a "right" fitted to his needs. However, only a few have the word "duty" included in their vocabulary.

**...Will Be Judged**

However, "rights" and "duties" are necessarily two sides of the same coin. One does not exist without the other. The right of the Peruvian state to resort to its armed institutions, ad hoc courts, and legal punishments are in keeping with its inalienable rights and duties before the nation to safeguard social peace and order. The "right" of terrorists to resort to these resources cannot and should not exist because they are not exercising a mandate of the people and thus not fulfilling a right or a duty.

In the Berenson case, "technically" speaking no treason "to the fatherland" may have been committed. Nevertheless, she did betray a country that had offered her a warm welcome. A country that did not question her political opinions or beliefs when she crossed the border, or ask her how much money she was introducing into the country. A country that did not question her about her plans to perpetrate attacks or smuggle drugs or guns, or how long she intended to stay illegally in Peruvian territory after her visa expired. In other words, she did not receive the same treatment that U.S. consulate offices grant to naive Peruvian tourists.

Perhaps it would be appropriate for Peru to enforce the same human rights policy enforced by the U.S. Government not as a means of reprisal, God forbid,

because of the Berenson affair, the renowned Kfir plane issue, or other celebrated cases. For example, we should start by demanding that all U.S. citizens who request entrance visas to Peru comply with the same security regulations that the United States enforces in its own consulate offices and on its own borders.

**Peruvian Government Extends State of Emergency**

PA0402204196 Paris AFP in Spanish  
1522 GMT 4 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Lima, 4 Feb (AFP) — The government has extended the state of emergency another 60 days in eight departments after establishing that "some signals of public order disturbance" still exist, and in view of the need to "conclude the pacification process," according to the decree published on Sunday.

The emergency was decreed in 1982 when the Maoist group Shining Path (SL) emerged and now covers a little over 30 percent of the national territory. The Defense Ministry decree, published today in EL PERUANO official newspaper, added that it is necessary "to adopt measures aimed at preserving and restoring public order" in Amazon and Andean regions located north, center, and south of Peru.

These regions comprise provinces of the Departments of Huanuco, San Martin, Loreto, Pasco, Junin, Huancavelica, Ayacucho, and Cusco, where the Armed Forces will be in charge of maintaining internal order, according to the government's order.

According to military intelligence sources, armed SL columns remain active in these regions, especially in the Alto Huallaga Valley, approximately 600 km northeast of Lima, regarded the most violent zone in the country, as well as in the San Martin and Huanuco. The main SL leader is Oscar Ramirez Durand, alias "Feliciano," and he heads the faction known as Red Path. According to the security corps, he has taken over the leadership from SL founder Abimael Guzman, who is serving a life sentence in a Lima naval base.

Although less dangerous, according to these same sources, armed groups of the Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement have been detected in the Amazon region of central Peru, especially in the Satipo and Chanchamayo Provinces in central Andean Junin.

**Peru's Fujimori Denies Rumors of Minister's Resignation**

PY0302025596 Lima America Television Network  
in Spanish 0100 GMT 3 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] President Alberto Fujimori categorically denied today the rumors about the eventual

resignation of Economy Minister Jorge Camet over an alleged disagreement concerning the government prohibition on used car imports. Fujimori made this comment during his visit to Davos, Switzerland, where he is attending the annual meeting of the World Economic Forum, with the participation of presidents, ministers, and businessmen of the entire world.

[Begin recording] [passage omitted] [Unidentified reporter] After the government issued an emergency decree preventing imports of used cars, there have been rumors that Economy Minister Jorge Camet would resign at any time because of his disagreement with the decree. What can you tell us about this?

[Fujimori] That is absolutely false. This is a state matter; this is a measure that was unanimously adopted, and with the full conviction of the Council of Ministers.

[Reporter] Was this a hasty decision?

[Fujimori] Absolutely not, and if the decree was issued in an apparently unexpected manner, it was with the purpose of preventing the news about the decree from being leaked to the people, for if the decree had been known, thousands of used cars would have been purchased and the measure would have lost its effect. [passage omitted] [end recording]

**Uruguay**

**Uruguayan Ministers, PRC Vice Premier View Ties**

PY0202230996 Madrid EFE in Spanish  
1902 GMT 2 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Montevideo, 2 Feb (EFE) — Uruguay and the PRC today concurred on the prospective participation of PRC agents in Uruguay's open financial market to enter joint ventures for the Common Market of the South (Mercosur).

This overture was outlined during a meeting between Vice Premier Zhu Rongji, the PRC's "economy czar," and Uruguayan Foreign Minister Alvaro Ramos; Luis Mosca, Uruguayan economy and finance minister; Federico Slinger, Uruguayan industry, energy, and mining minister; and Carlos Gasparri, Uruguayan agriculture, livestock, and fishing minister.

An agreement will promote the establishment in Uruguay of PRC automobile assembly plants and facilities for electronic goods as well as other intermediate goods, whose processing will be completed in Montevideo before they are exported to our region, especially to Uruguay's Mercosur partners (Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay).

The Uruguayan foreign minister told EFE: "This represents an intelligent alternative that will benefit the two countries."

Minister Ramos described Zhu as "the main architect" of the economic reform being pursued by the PRC.

The Uruguayan foreign minister added: "We have agreed on our decision of enhancing and diversifying our relations, and increasing trade."

Uruguay's exports to the PRC, especially wool and squid, total \$100 million per year, and Uruguay's imports from the PRC, especially toys, clothes, and farm equipment, total about \$20 million.

After Argentina and Brazil, the PRC is the main purchaser of Uruguayan products. The PRC is the largest market for Uruguayan wool, as 45 percent of Uruguayan wool exports go there.

Troubles have been experienced recently and Uruguayan wool exports to the PRC market, especially Shanghai, which concentrates 70 percent of all purchases, have ground to a halt.

The Uruguayan foreign minister added: "The PRC vice premier has promised us that he would personally become involved in this issue to achieve a quick solution."

During their meeting, the Uruguayan ministers and Zhu Rongji, who was accompanied by four vice ministers and the People's Bank of China vice president, reviewed the prospective participation of other PRC financial agents in the Uruguayan open market.

The PRC vice premier offered to the Uruguayan ministers technological cooperation for the development of various sectors.

Official sources told EFE that Ramos, along with entrepreneurs from the fishing and wool sectors, would pay an official visit to Beijing and Shanghai during the second half of this year to make headway in the signing of other prospective agreements.

During the meeting, Uruguay confirmed its decision of supporting the PRC's entry into the WTO. It was also announced that the PRC agriculture vice minister would pay an official visit to Montevideo next week.

Zhu Rongji arrived in Uruguay after visiting Argentina and Chile. He will pay a private visit to the Punta del Este beach resort this weekend. Punta del Este lies 150 km east of Montevideo. Zhu Rongji will travel to Germany, where he will end his tour of South America and Europe, on 5 February.

#### Uruguayan Paper Criticizes Brazil-Argentina Auto Pact

PY0302024096 Sao Paulo GAZETA MERCANTIL  
in Portuguese 1 Feb 96 p A7

[Report by Maria Helena Tachinardi]

[FBIS Translated Text] Uruguay, the smallest Mercosur [Common Market of the South] member, has criticized the recent agreement for the automobile sector signed in Buenos Aires by Brazil and Argentina. Sectors within the Uruguayan Government and the private sector have regarded the agreement as a factor that strengthens bilateral action, noting that this type of issue should be included in the Mercosur agenda.

Uruguay also signed bilateral agreements for the automobile sector with Argentina and Brazil. The complaint, however, is that the agreement signed by the largest partners will be considered as the foundation for a quadripartite Mercosur agreement, which will come into force in the year 2000.

The most radical criticism came from Jose Astigarraga, president of the Uruguayan Chamber of Automotive Industries, who said: "The two countries acted as if they were the owners of Mercosur." Uruguayan Industry Minister Federico Slinger said he was informed about the document at the last Mercosur Council meeting in Punta del Este, at the end of 1995. He said, however, that "the agreement must be formally submitted to Mercosur, where we will evaluate it."

Uruguayan sources in Montevideo and in Brasilia have said that the government of President Julio Maria Sanguinetti has promised to support the Brazilian position at the WTO, in connection with the "waiver" [preceding world in English] (authorization) for maintaining a provisional measure dealing with the automobile sector. Such support, however, is conditioned on a discussion of the issue within the Mercosur Commercial Commission.

An Uruguayan official source has said that the "ad hoc" committee for the automobile sector of the Commercial Commission, created in December 1994, has not yet held any meeting.

Asked about the Uruguayan criticism, Itamaraty reported that in the official conversations, Uruguay expressed support for the Argentine-Brazilian agreement, and for the "waiver" that Brazil will seek from the WTO.

Uruguayan Ambassador to Brasilia Mario Fernandez believes that Mercosur does not have a "multilateral mentality." He said Uruguay is concerned about the trend toward bilateralism. "The creation of a multilateral, community culture is essential for development of Mercosur

as a project, which should reach far beyond a customs union."

Fernandez said there are currently two trends: Consider Mercosur simply as an economic fact, and "a second interpretation, which can be rebutted, to the effect that the axis of the creation of Mercosur is the rapprochement between Brazil and Argentina."

"The emphasis on those two features, the economic approach and the bilateral trend, has hindered the notion of community," the ambassador said. He added that Mercosur is a monolithic bloc only in its dealings abroad, with the WTO, the EU, or Chile, for example.

Yet according to Fernandez, the four countries have not yet engaged in "true community action," and this, he went on, will hinder the creation of an organ for settlement of the disputes within Mercosur. "If we continue to operate within the bilateral concept framework, it will not be easy to resolve problems," he concluded.

### Venezuela

#### Venezuela Minister on Talks With IMF on Tax Package

PA0402163796 Caracas *Venezolana de Television*  
*Network in Spanish* 1545 GMT 31 Jan 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Finance Minister Raul Matos Azocar explained to the National Congress that the package of tax measures will not be to the detriment of the majority.

[Begin recording] [Matos] We have seen in the table of negotiations that Venezuela cannot take a measure on the price of gasoline, for instance, because of the impact it would have on transportation and society until the package of subsidies is not ready. This is the firm stance we are maintaining now, although we cannot say that the IMF has accepted it.

[Reporter Fernando Porte] Matos used 15 minutes of his explanation to outline the government's social programs. The family basket program is to be expanded to cover 12 million Venezuelans. The job programs will continue to be in force, with new programs added to it. He announced the creation of a permanent programming system among the Central Bank of Venezuela (BCV), the government, and other international organisms.

[Matos] That is why we are proposing to the BCV and asking the Inter-American Development Bank and the World Bank for their financial support to create a permanent coordination system to program monetary policies between the BCV and the government.

[Porte] In discussing the country's total reserves, the finance minister said they total \$10 billion. He added this figure is satisfactory and that some priority [word indistinct] could help or assist in the economic development of the country. [end recording]

#### Venezuelan Officials Confiscate Subversive Material

PA0302120796 Caracas *EL NACIONAL in Spanish*  
1 Feb 96 p A17

[Report by Berenice Gomez Velasquez]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Top police sources have unofficially reported that a Disip [Directorate of Intelligence and Prevention Services] commission on Tuesday night conducted a raid on a house located in La Pastora, where they seized abundant propaganda material calling for the resignation of President Rafael Caldera, and arrested four active members of the Red Flag [BR].

The Disip reported that the four BR members in their custody will be released soon after they are rebooked.

The police described the confiscated material, printed by the BR, as "subversive." The BR is a subversive group that continues to work silently throughout the lower-class districts of Caracas. It has been allied, since the 27 November 1992 coup attempt, with the MBR- 200 [200 Revolutionary Bolivarian Movement], led by Lieutenant Colonel Hugo Chavez Frias and some of his followers.

The Disip possessed intelligence reports associating the BR with the house that was raided, and they waited for the material to be readied and printed before conducting the "house call."

The Military Intelligence Directorate is following the footsteps of the MBR-200, and the Disip is doing the same with the BR. The two security organizations are closely monitoring the increasing acts of violence fueled by the announcement of hikes in public transportation fares and is not ruling out the possibility of further violence due to next week's visit by Pope John Paul II.

According to the unofficial report, officials have a 20-page file on the subversive activities of BR member Nelson Bracca, who was a former active member of the disarmed Armed Forces of National Liberation, which was one of the guerrilla groups defeated by the National Armed Forces [FAN] during the sixties.

#### The Avila Plan, If They Get Out of Hand

As he left the White Palace after attending the Governors Convention, Defense Minister Brigadier General Moises Orozco Graterol said "the recent disturbances are typical of students. We are, however, investigating

whether any political group was tied to the incidents. If the students' disturbance of the peace gets out of hand, the FAN [National Armed Forces] is ready to implement the Avila Plan."

Although the order to confine troops to quarters has not been issued, the military and police are on state of alert, as is the intention to implement the Avila Plan — of internal contingency — in case the public transportation fare hikes spark further disturbances of the peace, particularly in Caracas and the bedroom communities located on the city's outskirts. [passage omitted]

#### **Venezuelan Minister on Alleged Colombian Forces Incursion**

*PA0302120996 Caracas Venezolana de Television Network in Spanish 0200 GMT 31 Jan 96*

[Report by Pedro Prado]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Anchor Sergio Biferi] It was clearly established on 30 January that the alleged incursion of National Guard members into Colombian territory is completely false.

Pedro Prado tells us that reports of an alleged incursion in the area of Paraguachon could be a smokescreen in view of the political situation in the neighboring country.

[Prado] Defense Minister Moises Orozco Graterol, when learning of news dispatches reporting on the alleged incursion, proceeded to verify the report with Venezuelan military officers in Zulia State. The result was that there was no such incursion in Colombian territory. Colombian authorities were also consulted about the matter:

[Begin Orozco recording] I spoke with Colombian Defense Minister Juan Carlos Esguerra yesterday, and he said he was not aware of any incursions in Colombian territory. I simply believe certain individuals who are interested in creating a justification or an excuse to distract the public's attention from the problems in Colombia are using these groundless accusations. [end recording]

[Prado] The Armed Forces have also evicted approximately 120 garimpeiros [Brazilian gold seekers] from Bolivar State:

[Begin Orozco recording] The National Guard has conducted an operation, and if landing strips are found, we will bomb them to prevent them from being used for the transportation of garimpeiros or of supplies used to illegally exploit our mines, which is also causing great environmental damage. [end recording]

The defense minister has confirmed the confiscation of two Guyanese registered vessels that were operating in Venezuelan waters, near the Orinoco River delta. One of the ships is being held in the port of Guiria, and the other was already released.

#### **Venezuela To Maintain Public Order in Miranda State**

*PA0402135496 Caracas Venezolana de Television Network in Spanish 0200 GMT 31 Jan 96*

[Report by Melisa Soto]

[FBIS Translated Text] Beginning on Wednesday, the National Guard will be responsible for maintaining public order in Miranda State, while new state administration officials restructure and reorganize the police corps.

This announcement, made by newly-installed Governor Enrique Mendoza during his inauguration, will be accompanied by other measures, including the enforcement of a curfew for minors after 2100, fines between 25,000 and 30,000 bolivares for irresponsible parents, the strong compliance with the Law on Vagrants and Juvenile Delinquents, control on the sale and consumption of alcohol on streets, and the expulsion of all illegal aliens.

[Begin recording] [Mendoza] We are going to create a new model. In Miranda State, we are going to submit a draft bill for the creation of the first autonomous state police in Miranda State, where we will copy the models implemented in Sucre and Chacao Municipalities to convert them into a state police.

[Chacao Mayor Irene Saez] I believe that in addition to this initiative, the state will promote plans for social development, culture development — important enough to be promoted in every corner of the state — and above all social concerns. [end recording]

The governor also confirmed reports about looting attempts in several cities in Miranda State.

[Begin recording] [Mendoza] I urge citizens, particularly students, to give me some time while I assume the office of state governor, so as to determine the origins of every protest.

[Alfredo Lazo, Guarena military police commander] Everything is under control. We have patrolled the downtown area [words indistinct] Leoni. Security corps are patrolling the sector of Guarenas and so far there is no problem. [end recording]

According to Monsignor Mario Moronta [Los Teques bishop], we all have the right to protest, but with dignity and without violence.

[Begin Moronta recording] I believe the time has come to seek more creative ways to protest, especially to join our efforts. I believe that when we hold a constructive dialogue without violence, we will regain confidence. [end recording]

One of the first decrees Mendoza will announce in the next few months will be the establishment of free transportation for students, the privatization of bus terminals in the region, and the implementation of special hours for workers travel.

**Venezuelan Army at Readiness Along Zulia Border Area**

PA0502040896 Maracaibo PANORAMA in Spanish  
1 Feb p 4-1

[Report by Argenis Bravo]

[FBIS Translated Text] Tactical combat units of the Armed Forces are at a state of maximum operational readiness in Zulia to face any sneak attack from subversive elements and from bandits roaming the border region.

The announcement was made yesterday by Army Brigadier General Erasmo Jose Lara Ortega, commander of the 1st Infantry Division and of Zulia's military barracks, who surveyed the border area being protected by the Grand Combat Unit [Gran Unidad de Combate] under his command, whose basic mission is to safeguard the territorial integrity of the country's northwestern region.

PANORAMA interviewed him with regard to charges by ranchers from Machiques and La Villa that there are guerrillas in the area.

General Lara Ortega said that "to fulfill my important responsibility as commander of the military barracks and of the 1st Infantry Division, which covers a broad territory, including the border regions, these regions are receiving broad protection as ordered by the Defense Ministry. Yesterday I flew over part of the territory under my responsibility to survey it, especially the areas of El Diluvio — where Army units have been mobilized — and Minas Norte, to determine our cadres' capabilities and the training they are receiving to conquer operational difficulties in the region."

General Lara Ortega added: "I am pleased with what I saw: Much enthusiasm, the esprit de corp that characterizes our troops, and the priority attention being given to their welfare considering that the men assigned there must endure the rigors of a rugged natural environment that is being counterbalanced by social welfare and the training and love they put on to reach objectives."

The commander said that, from a military point of view, the situation in the border regions where crimes have been committed is being observed closely thanks to the fact that there is much information from the region, although, he said, I want to emphasize that no one has come to the 1st Infantry Division or the Zulia barracks to denounce specific subversive activities reported by the media.

Gen. Lara Ortega noted: "I call for careful reporting so that we do not give any recognition to these type of illegal activities. We are increasing our intelligence work, and I personally have met separately in Machiques with several ranchers to learn personally from them about their position on the crime problem that is probably being generated by subversive elements and bandits."

The general said that the ranchers told him that crimes continue being committed but, the general explained, these are common crimes and for this reason "we have to be careful about how we describe the elements operating in the region. The subversive ones form clandestine organizations that use the surprise factor and should not be confused with bandits, who are the people operating in the region."

Lara Ortega said there are many bandits in the area, and they should not be confused with subversive elements because we have the border region under control and can quickly repel any attack by irregular forces.

The general said that not only the Armed Forces but also state security organizations are watching and controlling the area.

He reported: "The Armed Forces are permanently patrolling the border regions and training our military personnel. We have just received a contingent we are training. It is made of young people, worthy human resources provided 100 percent by Zulia State, who are strengthening the operational readiness we need so much. This is very important."

General Lara Ortega continued: "The trained troops successfully fulfill their missions. It is necessary that each element be called by its name. We are constantly fighting drug-trafficking, bandits, and subversive activities, and these activities must not be confused, because this confusion generates erroneous interpretations by the people and problems."

"In other words," the general went on, "what we ask — and this was the crux of my talks with the ranchers — is that concepts be clarified, because there are people who describe three or four bandits roaming the region as rebels, and I do not want this kind of confusion. Subversive elements have rifles and so forth and wear fatigues and must be carefully detected. Confusion

should be avoided. We know that crimes are being committed, that food and shotguns have been stolen from ranchers, but these are isolated cases and not big events that we could view as incursions by guerrillas

from other countries. I can state that in Zulia we maintain operational control of our border areas and tactical units there are at a state of maximum readiness."

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